Institute
of International
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KEY ELEMENTS OF LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION FOR TRANSFORMATION IN MEETING THE DEMANDS OF THE VUCA WORLD PHENOMENON

A thesis

by

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RESEARCHER DEMOGRAPHICS

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RESEARCH DECLARATION

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Daniela Eberspächer-Roth (Ph.D.)

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Daniela Eberspächer-Roth (Ph.D.)

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The very essence of this research about leadership communication for transformation is embedded in the following spiritual wisdom of Jesus Christ: “You are the salt of the earth” (Holy Bible, 2011: **Matthew 5:13**), and “You are the light of the earth” (Holy Bible, 2011: **Matthew 5:14**).

DEDICATION

This research in particular is dedicated to those leaders committed to making a positive difference, for being both ‘salt and light’ in transforming situations for the better with a particular concern for:

- The truth of the situation and true will in vision;
- team knowledge and participation; and
- values of crisis and transformed solutions.

ABSTRACT

The research problem that will be investigated within the ambit of this research study reads as follow: “More often than not, leadership communication does not facilitate transforming dynamics, primarily attributed to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA (**V**olatile, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions”. As a result of these challenges within the VUCA world phenomenon, responsible leaders find themselves facing a transformational dilemma between the ‘task dimension’ of their roles, and the ‘relationship dimension’ thereof, with the added danger of ‘actionism’ on one hand and of ‘talkism’ on the other. The danger for both dimensions is extreme failure of leadership transformation efforts within the VUCA world phenomenon.

This dispensation leads into the following research question, which will be interrogated as a result of the research and which would form the crux of the research namely: “What key elements and purposeful structured leadership can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics?”

The research hypothesis based on the primary theme of the research study and which will, at the conclusion of the study, be either ‘accepted’ or ‘rejected’, reads as follows: $\mathbf{H_0}$: There is a positive correlation between purposeful leadership communication and structured transformation following the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics.

The thesis proposes a structured set of mitigating factors to be incorporated as a new value paradigm of transformation with leadership professionalism and humanity serving as a higher-order configuration.

The research is based on the Design Thinking research method the findings of which returned elements for a problem-solving guideline encompassing:

- Structured leadership communication for transformation.
- Improved dialogue and understanding.
- Effective and efficient change dynamics.
- Contributing to the concept of human flourishing within the context of the VUCA phenomenon.

More specifically, the research culminates in a structured sequence of events to facilitate the intervention and leadership communication for transformation within the VUCA world phenomenon as a Transformative Communication Concept (TCC).

Keywords: Leadership, Communication, Transformation, VUCA world phenomenon, Change dynamics, Transformative Communication Concept (TCC).

KURZFASSUNG

Im Rahmen dieser Forschungsstudie wird das folgende Problem untersucht: „Weniger denn mehr, erleichtert Führungskommunikation nicht die Dynamiken von Transformation, vor allem aufgrund der Komplexität der fortwährenden Präsenz des allgegenwärtigen Phänomens der VUCA (**V**olatile, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) -Welt, resultierend in unzureichendem Dialog und Verständnis, was wiederum zu ineffektiven und ineffizienten Veränderungsmaßnahmen führt“. Als Folge dieser Herausforderungen sehen sich verantwortungsbewusste Führungskräfte in einem Dilemma zwischen der „Aufgabendimension“ und der „Beziehungsdimension“ ihrer Rolle. Die Gefahr beider Dimensionen ist einerseits „Aktionismus“ und andererseits „Talkismus“, jeweils verbunden mit drastischem Scheitern der Transformationsanstrengungen innerhalb des Phänomens der VUCA-Welt.

Dieses Dilemma führt zu der folgenden Frage, die im Rahmen der Forschung untersucht wird und somit das Kernelement der Untersuchung bildet: „Welche Schlüsselelemente und welche zielgerichtet strukturierte Führung können in Bezug auf Kommunikation für Transformation im Rahmen des Phänomens der VUCA-Welt angewendet werden, um nicht allein einen verbesserten Dialog und Verständnis zu sichern, sondern auch in einer effektiven und effizienten Veränderungsdynamik zu resultieren?“

Die Hypothese, die auf dem Hauptthema der Forschung basiert und am Ende der Studie entweder „akzeptiert“ oder „abgelehnt“ wird, lautet wie folgt: H0: „Es besteht ein positiver Zusammenhang zwischen zielgerichteter Führungskommunikation und strukturierter Transformation im Rahmen des Phänomens der VUCA-Welt, um nicht nur einen verbesserten Dialog und Verständnis zu gewährleisten, sondern auch zu einer effektiven und effizienten Veränderungsdynamik zu führen“.

Die Dissertation bietet einen strukturierten Ansatz mildernder Faktoren, die als neues Werteparadigma der Transformation mit Führungs-

professionalität und Menschlichkeit einer Konfiguration höherer Ordnung dienen.

Basierend auf der ‚Design-Thinking'-Methode resultiert das Untersuchungsergebnis in einem Problemlösungsleitfaden welcher die folgenden Elemente umfasst:

- Strukturierte Führungskommunikation für Transformation.
- Verbesserter Dialog und Verständnis.
- Effektive und effiziente Veränderungsdynamik.
- Einen Beitrag zu dem Konzept von ‚human flourishing' im Rahmen des VUCA-Welt Phänomens

Schließlich gipfelt die Forschungsarbeit in einem transformativen Kommunikations-Konzept, einer strukturierten Abfolge von Ereignissen, um die Intervention und die Führungskommunikation für die Transformation innerhalb des Phänomens der VUCA-Welt zu erleichtern, als ‚Transformative Communication Concept' (TCC).

Keywords: Leadership, Kommunikation, Transformation, VUCA-Welt, Change Dynamiken, Transformative Communication Concept (TCC).

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Communication: The act or an instance of communicating; the imparting or exchange of information, ideas, or feelings (Collins English Dictionary, 2022a: **Online**). Communication as referred to within the ambit of this research, embraces all types of messages from the leader to the interlocutor, comprising purposely chosen words and information including tonality, body language, time, location and structure of topics for mutual interaction and understanding.

Leadership: Leadership is the position or state of being in control of a group of people (Collins English Dictionary, 2022b: **Online**). Leadership, as referred to within the ambit of this research, is used to describe the responsibility for the success of transformation including all elements from initiating to evaluation during a transformation journey. Implied in this is the fact that communication for transformation does not have to be attributed solely to one person, but can be extended to a leadership team taking responsibility, as well as delegating specific topics to internal or external professionals, e.g. a common way for project-management.

Transformation: A change or alteration, especially a radical one (Collins English Dictionary, 2022c: **Online**). Transformation as referred to within the ambit of this research describes the major change from a basic situation to a transformed situation.

VUCA: An acronym short for **V**olatility, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplexity, and **A**mbiguity (Bennett & Lemoine, 2022: Online).The acronym VUCA, as referred to within the ambit of this research, is used as a synonym for all types of challenges or crises,

where situations from the past are no longer acceptable for the future.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 1

In this chapter, an overview is provided on the scope of the research. In this respect, Figure 1.1 depicts the individual chapters in context of the overall research, and relative position of this chapter.

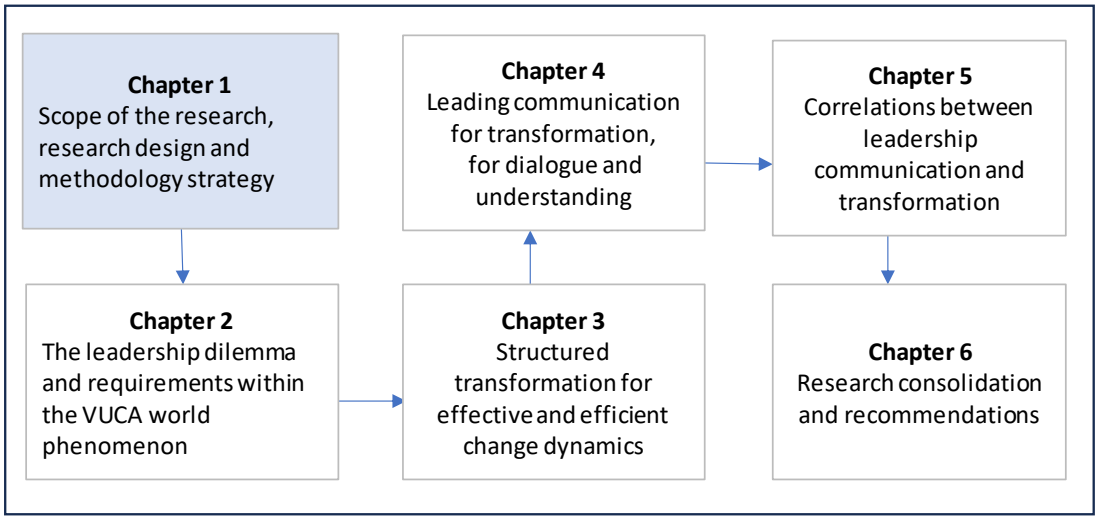

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 1.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This research is specifically designed as a dynamic communication guideline, as there is no known holistic approach that combines leadership for transformation with key elements of communication in order to support the success of transformative decisions and actions, undertaken within the VUCA (**V**olatile **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) world phenomenon.

More specifically, the research problem to be researched within the ambit of this thesis reads as follows: “More often than not, leadership communication does not facilitate transforming dynamics, primarily attributed to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA (**V**olatile, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions”. In addressing the above aspect, this chapter provides context to the research gap to be mitigated, underpinned by the research questions, objectives and hypothesis statement.

This chapter moreover sets the scene for the research in this thesis, by addressing (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- The research problem statement.
- The primary and secondary research questions and reciprocal research objectives.
- The research design and methodology strategy.
- Ethical considerations.
- Research assumptions.
- Thesis structure and chapter content.

For clarity of purpose and transparency in line with ethical research principles, the attention of the reader is drawn to the fact that this research study maps the format and structure of previous doctoral research by this author, within the ‘same operational environment’, albeit in a ‘different field of study’. As a result, the research design and methodology strategy from the previous research (Eberspächer-Roth, 2018), maps on a one-to-one basis to the research design and methodology strategy of this study.

CHAPTER 1:
SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY STRATEGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION: THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION

In the hands of the most significant and greatest leaders, communication is key in changing the world. This can be observed in current times in how Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy mobilised communication and proverbially 'sends it into battle', in a bid to defend his country against the aggression of Russian president Vladimir Putin. This act is perhaps the first direct account of the immense power of communication eloquence as Homer had Odysseus speak of, "…a certain kind of man" with "…comeliness on his words". People who look at him, "…are filled with joy at the sight, and he speaks to them without faltering in winning modesty, and shines among those who are gathered" (Homer, cited by Vickers, 1989:17). In contrast, the very first book of the Bible reveals the dangerously transformative power of communication. In the story of Adam and Eve, the serpent beguiles Eve with his deceptive language and false promises into eating from the Tree of Knowledge, leading to their banishment from Paradise (Holy Bible, 2011: **Genesis 3**).

Despite the power of communication and its relevance for successful transformation as described above, a communicative framework has thus far in general not been the focus of management considerations. While leadership and transformation, as well as change management and human development management, are widely researched, the preparation and ongoing communication for transformation at a holistic leadership level, remains the exception, rather than the rule.

Due to the fact that modern leaders operate in the context of the VUCA (**V**olatile **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) world phenomenon, the list of communication requirements for leadership for transformation is

reciprocally elongated and important, in that situations must be analysed, conflicts and interests must be clarified, framework conditions must be explained, feasibility and viability must be proved, goals and change actions must be decided upon, and importantly, the sustainability of the attained communication level must be secured and further developed. Concurrently, it is of importance to establish new images for identification with pride and motivation, to overcome the feeling of loss that are typically inherent within major change initiatives, which even more so are highlighted within the context of the VUCA world phenomenon.

The world is in abundance of examples of more or less successfully led transformation, emphasising the fact that leadership communication is not simply about using media or simply passing on information. It is in fact about much more. Leadership communication for transformation is an important, if not the 'central managerial power' for significant, and subsequently, sustainable changes. It is therefore evident that leadership for transformation requires the personal commitment of the leader. It is the leader who starts the dialogue with those involved, both in order to change dispensations positively, and concurrently to convey meaning and orientation. The key factor is the most difficult challenge of leadership, namely to stimulate and carry out meaningful transformation, especially in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous times.

As a result, the following two aspects are considered of critical importance to this research study, namely:

- The content-related editing of communication messages in line with the relation-oriented discourses of arguments, on which effective change communication is based.
- The result-oriented dramaturgical process design of efficient change, using methods of personnel development and change management.

To reciprocally address these two aspects, the aim of this research inter alia, is to formulate key elements of leadership communication that can be applied for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon,

underpinning a 'Transformative Communication Concept' (TCC), which would, by implication, not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The phenomenon of the VUCA world seems to be an age-old topic. The notion of VUCA, was first mooted in the 1990s, to describe the more volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous multilateral world that resulted from the end of the Cold War, when the wall between East and West Germany fell. The common usage of the term VUCA, derives from military vocabulary to describe emerging ideas in strategic leadership (Kumar Das & Ara, 2014: 6410 citing Kinsinger & Walcj, 2012).

Over time, the phenomenon of the VUCA world has by no means lost its relevance for leadership; on the contrary, just like the energy crisis or supply chain problems, it is part and parcel of the canon of the new 'Zeitenwende'[1], a continental turning point triggered by the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine (Scholz, 2022: **Online**). Entire business sectors are in upheaval, especially where markets are being re-regulated. As a result, companies as well as government have to adapt to completely new competitive conditions. The new global struggle for resources, as well as peaceful locations and the reliability of partners, will significantly shape the development of economies and society as a whole in the coming decades.

Furthermore, such dispensations lead to an acceleration of individual, organisational and social challenges. Effectiveness and efficiency are still key for success, while volatility, uncertainty, complexity and a lack of clarity characterise the background to leadership. Mooted by a variety of new

[1] "Eine Zeitenwende in der Geschichte unseres Kontinents." (*"A turning point in the history of our continent."*) Remarks attributed to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, speaking during a special session of the German Bundestag on February 27, 2022 in Berlin, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine three days earlier.

framework conditions, the pressure to adapt and change is high. This weighs in on responsible leaders, who are required to undertake correspondingly challenging analyses, goals and change-actions. Old certainties and process routings are dramatically called into question, with high demands placed on the personal willingness of everyone involved in the change process. Executives must reorient themselves rigorously. Ineffective information sources and inefficient decision routines no longer map to the traditional understanding of leadership communication.

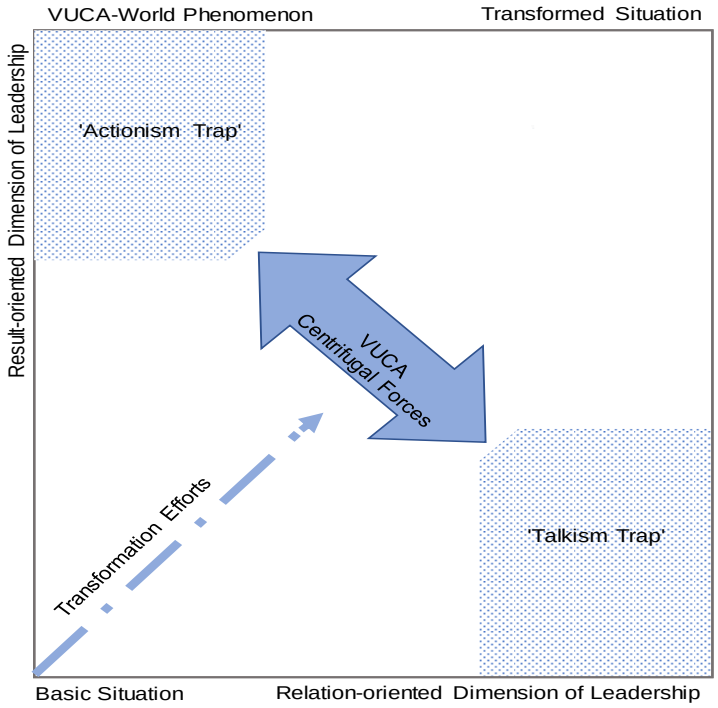
Leadership typically involves two aspects (Quirke, 2009,74), namely the 'task orientated dimension' of the role within the result-oriented setting of clear direction and helping others to know what their efforts mean, and the 'relationship oriented dimension' of the role, where the focus is on communication that builds constructive relationships, and make employees feel valued and respected.

As a result of these challenges within the VUCA world phenomenon, responsible leaders find themselves facing a transformational dilemma between the 'task orientated dimension' of their role, and the 'relationship orientated dimension', with the danger of 'actionism' on one hand, and of 'talkism' on the other. The danger for both dimensions is extreme failure of leadership transformation efforts within the VUCA world phenomenon. For clarity of purpose, 'leadership traps' created as a result of the pressure from the VUCA phenomenon include:

- **Actionism:** Action is undertaken without adequate communication, increasing ineffective exposure.
- **Talkism:** Extended discussion without adequate action, increasing inefficient time loss.

The graphic depiction of Design 1.2, depicts this leadership transformation dilemma in the VUCA world between 'actionism' (WorldSenseDictionary, 2023: **Online**), and 'talkism' (Levoy, 2022: **Online)**. The VUCA phenomenon, with its resulting pressure for change, brings 'VUCA

Centrifugal Forces' to the fore, curtailing efficient and effective change dynamics. Instead, leaders and groups can be observed tending to two different extremes, shown as 'traps' bordering a linear transformation-route.



Design 1.1: VUCA Centrifugal Forces and Leadership Traps (**Source:** Own source).

This research aims to formulate an approach for purposeful structured leadership communication for transformation, mitigating the above listed centrifugal forces created as a result of the VUCA world phenomenon, and therefore supporting dialog and understanding for effective and efficient change dynamics. Intensive and systematic leadership communication, which is based on a close interlocking of key elements of communication with methodical evaluation of examples, can therefore successfully shape transformation goals and channel major change actions in the VUCA world.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM (RESEARCH GAP)

Against the above background, and with a plethora of research conducted in the fields of communication as well as leadership and change management, there is no known holistic approach to combine leadership for

transformation with key elements of communication to support the success of transformative decisions and actions to be undertaken within the VUCA world phenomenon.

As a result, the research problem to be researched within the ambit of this thesis, reads as follows: “More often than not, leadership communication does not facilitate transforming dynamics, primarily attributed to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA (**V**olatile, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplex and **A**mbiguous) world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions”.

1.4 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

The primary research question, forming the crux of the research, reads as follows: “What key elements and purposeful structured leadership can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics?”

1.4.1 Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions, which will be researched in support of the primary research question, are as follows:

- What are the leadership dilemmas and requirements due to the VUCA world phenomenon and their value propositions?
- What structured transformation process can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics?
- What purposeful structured communication concept could be followed for leading transformation to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon?

- What are the correlations between the key elements of communication and transformation in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics?

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT

The research hypothesis based on the primary theme of the research study and which will, at the conclusion of the study, be either 'accepted' or 'rejected', reads as follows:

H_0: There is a positive correlation between purposeful leadership communication and structured transformation following the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics.

1.6 PRIMARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this research study, which maps to the primary research question, is to mitigate the research problem through the implementation of a problem-solving guideline, and reads as follows: "To formulate key elements and purposeful structured leadership that can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics".

1.6.1 Secondary research objectives

The secondary research objectives, which map to and are formulated in support of the secondary research questions, read as follows:

- To clarify the leadership dilemmas and requirements due to the VUCA world phenomenon and their value propositions.
- To determine what structured transformation process can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing

with the VUCA world phenomenon that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics?

- To develop a purposeful structured communication concept that could be implemented for leading transformation to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon.
- To determine what the correlation is between the key elements of communication and transformation in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics.

1.7 PRIMARY THEME OF THE LITERATURE STUDIES

The primary theme of the literature study to be undertaken within the ambit of this thesis pertains to the following topics:

- Leadership dilemmas.
- Transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics.
- Leading communication for transformation.

1.8 RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process provides insight into the process of 'how' the research will be conducted, from formulating the research proposal to the final submission of the thesis. Adapted from the six fundamental stages in the research process, as upheld by Collis and Hussey (2003:10), the following practical research process, to be followed in this thesis, is elaborated upon below:

- Identify a 'researchable' research topic.
- Identify a specific complex problem falling within the ambit of the selected research field, ensuring that the identified problem has the potential of being researched free of potential inhibiting factors.
- Conduct a holistic survey of the functional area in which the identified complex problem exists.
- Select a research design and methodology strategy, including the research method and the data collection methodology.
- Conduct an in-depth study on the subject being researched.

- Formulate a structured approach to mitigate the identified research problem.

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY STRATEGY

For the purpose of clarity, transparency and ethical research principles, the attention of the reader is yet again drawn to the fact that this research study maps the format and structure of previous doctoral research by this author, within the 'same operational environment', albeit in a 'different field of study'. As a result, the research design and methodology strategy from the previous research (Eberspächer-Roth, 2018), maps on a one-to-one basis to the content of Paragraph 1.9 of this chapter, reflecting the same headings and sub-headings.

1.9.1 Positioning the research within the context of the research design and methodology strategy

As this research will be focused on a specific outcome, namely the formulation of a 'Transformative Communication Concept' (TCC), 'applied research' will serve as research type, the latter, which has been designed to apply its findings to solving a specific, existing problem. Furthermore, 'applied research' involves the application of existing knowledge to improve management practices and policies as in the instance of this research study.

The research will take place in the social world, focusing on the systems in which people operate, which in turn explains why people do what they do, implying that an interpretive paradigm would apply. In addition, the research will be theoretical in nature, using a phenomenological paradigm as a basis. As a result, the type of data which will be used to support the research findings will be qualitative. However, this does not mean that the quantitative research paradigm will be totally excluded from the research. Deductive analogies will flow from the research findings.

1.9.2 Research method

For the purpose of this research, applied research will be conducted. According to Collis and Hussey (2009:5-8), applied research involves the application of findings and existing knowledge to improve management practices and policies in solving a specific and existing problem. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009:9), applied research will improve the understanding of particular business problems, it will result in a solution to the problem, and the findings will have practical relevance and value. The 'design thinking' research method has been selected for the research, which is expanded upon below at a high level to provide a holistic perspective of the selected method.

According to Watkins (2023:99), design thinking is, in many ways, the obverse of 'scientific thinking'. "Where the scientist sifts facts to discover patterns and insights, the designer invents new patterns and concepts to address facts and possibilities" (Owen, 2007:17). Furthermore, according to Watkins (2023:99): "The design thinking research method, by its very nature, would call for an in-depth understanding thereof, requiring extensive further analysis". However, to aid the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the design thinking research method, Owen (2007:24-25), lists the following as 'characteristics' and 'ways of working' in the scope of the concept 'design thinking':

- **Conditioned inventiveness:** Creative thinking for designers is directed towards inventing. Designers tend to be more interested in the 'what' questions rather than the 'why's', which are of interest to the scientist. Design creativity, as a result, compliments scientific creativity.
- **Human-centred focus:** Design thinking must continually consider how what is being created will respond to the client's needs.
- **Environment-centred concern:** Present-day thinking places environmental interests at a level with human interests as primary constraints on the design process. The ultimate value of human-and environment-centeredness is a guarantee that the best interests of

humankind and the environment will be considered in any research project.

- **Ability to visualise:** All designers work visually. Designers can visualise ideas in a range of media, bringing a common view to concepts otherwise imagined uniquely and by everyone in a discussion.
- **Tempered optimism:** It is difficult to work—and especially, to work creatively—in a pessimistic, critical world. Designers are taught to recognise this and to establish optimism and proactive ways of working.
- **Bias for adaptivity:** Design thinking approaches problems with the view that where possible, solutions should be adaptive—in production to fit the needs of users uniquely and throughout to fit users' evolving needs.
- **Predisposition toward multi-functionality:** In terms of design thinking, solutions to problems need not be mono-functional. Designers routinely look for multiple dividends from solutions to problems.
- **Systemic view:** Design thinking is holistic. Modern design addresses problems as systems problems, with opportunities for systemic solutions involving mixes of hardware, software, procedures, policies, organisational concepts, and whatever else is necessary to create a holistic solution.
- **View of the generalist:** Design thinking is highly generalist in its preparation and execution. In a world of specialists, there is a real need for those who can reach across disciplines to communicate and who can bring diverse experts together in a coordinated effort. For inventive creativity, the wider the reach of the knowledge base, the more likely the creative inspiration.
- **Ability to use language as a tool:** For design thinking, language serves as a tool. Visual language is used diagrammatically to abstract concepts, reveal and explain patterns, and simplify complex phenomena to their fundamental essences. Mathematical language is used to explore 'what if' questions where feasibility may be established by approximation or by calculations that are not exact, but close enough to support an idea or change a line of reasoning. Verbal language is used in descriptions where explanations go hand in hand with the

creative process, forcing invention where detail is lacking and expressing relationships that are not obvious visually.

- **Affinity for teamwork:** Design thinking is highly influenced by the concept of 'team-based design' (multi-disciplinary teams), spurred by developments in the industry.
- **Facility for avoiding the necessity of choice:** Design thinking eliminates the requirement to choose among alternative proposals, usually the product of different problem-solving approaches. Design thinking facilitates the searching of competing alternatives for their essential characteristics and finds ways to reformulate them in a new configuration. When this process is successful, the results represent a solution that avoids the decision to choose between different proposals and combine the best of both possible choices.
- **Self-governing practicality:** Design thinking allows exploring different solutions to complex phenomena in the foreground, while maintaining in the background a realistic appraisal of costs that can be met and functionality that can be affected.
- **Ability to work systematically with qualitative information:** Design thinking uses a tool kit of methods for a complete range of planning tasks covering ways to find information, to gain insights, to organise it optimally for conceptualisation, evaluate results, and communicate a plan during the development process. Methods such as this are qualitative, with information handling techniques applicable to many types of conceptual problems where complex system solutions are desirable.

Design thinking is a mindset and approach to problem-solving and innovation, different from other innovation and ideation processes in that it is solution-based and user-centric, rather than problem-based. This means, it focuses on the solution to a problem instead of the problem itself.

According to Han (2022: **Online**), Design Thinking and Innovation leverages a four-phase innovation framework venturing from concrete to abstract

thinking and back again as the process loops, reverses, and repeats as follows:

- **Clarify:** The first phase is about narrowing down the focus of the design thinking process. It involves identifying the problem statement through observation and taking the time to determine the problem as well as the actions that prevented a solution in the past.
- **Ideate**: Once the problem statement or question has been solidified but not finalised, the next step is ideation. One can use a tool such as Systematic Inventive Thinking (SIT) in this stage, which is useful for creating an innovative process that can be replicated in the future.
- **Develop:** The third phase involves developing concepts by critiquing a range of possible solutions. This includes multiple rounds of prototyping, testing, and experimenting to answer critical questions about a concept's viability.
- **Implement:** The fourth and final phase, namely implementation, is when the entire process comes together. As an extension of the development phase, implementation starts with testing, reflecting on results, reiterating, and testing again. This may require going back to a prior phase to iterate and refine until a successful solution is found. Such an approach is recommended because design thinking is often a nonlinear, iterative process.

1.9.3 Data collection methodology

Triangulation is a concept, which is not only limited to the collection of data from different sources ('data triangulation'), but also includes the use of multiple research methods ('methodological triangulation'), in which data is collected from different sources. According to Watkins (2023:125), data triangulation culminates in diverse data collection techniques, for example questionnaires, interviews, surveys and field studies.

Primary data will be collected by using 'explicit knowledge' (Tiwana, 2001:40; Turban, McLean and Wetherby, 2002:389; and Lucas 2000:33), gleaned from authoritative literature and this author's own 'tacit knowledge'

(Tiwana, 2001:39; and Turban, McLean and Wetherby, 2002:389) of transformational success and failures, as well as the aspects stimulating transformative activity. Both data collection methodologies fall within the context of either the qualitative or quantitative research paradigms.

1.10 DATA VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to Collis and Hussey (2009:204), validity is the extent to which the research findings are a true representation of what is being studied. Cooper and Schindler (2006:318-320), provide three methods of identifying validity, namely 'content validity', 'criterion related validity', and 'construct validity'. In this research study, 'content validity' will serve to ensure data validity.

Reliability or 'trustworthiness' is concerned with the findings of the research. The research findings are deemed reliable if the same results will be produced when the research is repeated. Collis and Hussy (2009:64) provide the following three common ways to determine the reliability of responses to questions in questionnaires and interviews, namely 'test re-test method', 'split-halves method', and 'internal consistency method'. In this research study, the 'internal consistency method' will be used to ensure that every item is correlated with every other item across the entire sample and the average inter-item correlation is taken as the index of reliability.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics has the objective of ensuring that no adverse consequences or harm follow from the research activities (Emory & Cooper, 1995:97). Cooper and Schindler (2006:108), believe that research demands ethical behaviour from all its participants. Furthermore, ethics are standards or norms of behaviour that guide moral choices about one's behaviour and relationships with others. Unethical activities and research are pervasive and include violating non-disclosure agreements, misrepresenting results,

deceiving people, breaking respondent confidentiality, avoiding legal liability, and more. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009:131), research ethics comprise four subsections namely:

- Ethical considerations pertaining to the research process in general.
- Ethical considerations pertaining to the initial access phase and the design phase.
- Ethical considerations in the data collection phase.
- Ethical considerations pertaining to the data analysis and reporting phases.

Cognisance must be taken of the generic ethical issues as stated below (Saunders *et al*., 2009:132; and Collis & Hussey, 2003:38-39):

- The privacy of the actual and potential participants must be ensured.
- Participation is on a voluntary basis. This in effect means that participants may at any stage exercise their right to withdraw partially or completely from the research activity.
- Consent and potential deception of participants. Potential participants must be informed of the intended purpose of the research and agreement should be obtained on the participants' research involvement.
- Upholding the confidentiality of information provided by participants.
- The researcher must be sensitive to the fact that participants may react in different ways to the selected data collection method. Each participant's reactions must be considered.
- The effect of the use, analysis and reporting of data on the participants.
- The objectivity and behaviour displayed by the researcher must be ethical at all times and above repute.

When attempting to gain initial access to potential participants, the possibility of ethical challenges and problems needs to be considered. Cognisance will be taken of individuals' right to refuse participation. When considering the matter of privacy, researchers should bear in mind that privacy also includes the nature and anticipated timing of approaching

participants, as well as the distribution and use of secondary research data (Saunders *et al*., 2009:133; and Remenyi, Williams, Money & Swartz, 2002:229-230). Saunders *et al.* (2009:134), are of the opinion that the extent of informed consent required, as well as the nature of establishing such informed consent, will be dependent on the nature of the research conducted.

1.12 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

Researchers at doctorate level, whether 'explicitly' or 'implicitly', make certain assumptions, which are a requirement not only when research is conducted, but also when the research is at proposal stage. There are four 'types' or 'categories' of assumptions, namely 'ontological assumptions', 'epistemological assumptions', 'assumptions concerning human nature', and 'methodological assumptions'. Due to the importance of research assumptions, specifically within the ambit of doctoral research, the above listed types of research assumptions call for closer scrutiny:

- **Ontological assumptions:** These are assumptions which concern the very essence of the phenomena they investigate. Ontology has to do with the way in which one notices things. The following serves as an example: Is your research about people and their collaboration on a product or service, or is it about processes which lead to a better, more efficient and cost-effective product or service? Is your research about accounts and bottom line because you draw on finance and accountancy, or are you researching the integration of customer demand, strategic stance, product development, delivery and distribution, which make up marketing philosophy? The events you decide to notice and the events you decide to ignore, the evidence which you will collect and the evidence you do not—indeed, the very decision on what counts as an event or as evidence and what does not—these all depend on your ontological position or stance.
- **Epistemological assumptions**: These are assumptions about the grounds of knowledge, about how one might begin to understand the world and communicate this as knowledge to fellow human beings.

Epistemology concerns what you personally believe, what represents knowledge, and what does not. The following serves as an example: Is your topic of research, as you identified it, the best technical solution to follow, or is the technical solution subject to certain policy considerations? Should you believe that policy disputes are usually resolved in favour of the most powerful stakeholder? Do you suspect that your main task will be to determine what that person's preferences are, rather than focus on technical details? If you feel that an entrepreneur's intuition is more reliable than a market survey and you set out to do a study of entrepreneurs' intuitions, are you by the same token justified in accepting your own gut feeling that an informant is basically correct when this evidence clashes with the story told by other informants? In detail: What counts as knowledge—the representation of one's own epistemological assumptions? When this has been established, what then counts as evidence (as represented by one's own ontological assumptions)?

- **Assumptions concerning human nature**: Associated with the ontological and epistemological assumptions (but conceptually separate from them) is a third set of assumptions, namely assumptions concerning 'human nature'. Assumptions concerning 'human nature' in particular refer to the relationship between human beings and their environment.
- **Methodological assumptions:** The above three sets of assumptions have direct implications for a fourth set of assumptions, which is of a 'methodological' nature: Each has important consequences for the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain 'knowledge'.

Burrell and Morgan (1979:23) refer to these four sets of assumptions (paradigms) as being: "…contiguous but separate—contiguous because of the shared characteristics, but separate because the differentiation in…of sufficient importance to warrant treatment…as four distinct entities… [which]…generate quite different concepts and analytical tools". The obvious question which follows is what and how do the assumptions (ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology) fit into the

contexts of 'nominalism/realism', 'anti-positivism/positivism', 'voluntarism/determinism', or 'ideographic/nomothetic'? Table 1.1 (below) reflects a holistic perspective of the four research assumptions.

Table 1.1: A holistic perspective of the four research assumptions.

Nominalism	**ONTOLOGY**	Realism
Anti-positivism	**EPISTOMOLOGY**	Positivism
Voluntarism	**HUMAN NATURE**	Determinism
Ideographic	**METHODOLOGY**	Nomothetic

Should the individual elements depicted in Table 1.1 above be expanded upon, the differences between the different assumptions (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:23), are highlighted below (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Meta-theoretical assumptions about the nature of social science.

Ontology	
Nominalism ➢ There is no real invariant structure 'outside' the individual. ➢ The individual creates structures by naming, labelling or defining concepts. ➢ These structures are continually recreated as individual experiences, and try to make sense of the un-structured-ness confronting him/her.	**Realism** ➢ Sees the world as separate and independent of the individual consciousness. ➢ These invariant structures exist and are waiting to be discovered.
Epistemology	
Anti-positivism ➢ Denies any objective reality and is essentially relativistic in claiming that reality can only be studied from the point of view of the individuals directly involved in the research.	**Positivism** ➢ One can objectify the phenomena under investigation. The object of study and the subject (doing the research) can be separated. ➢ The researcher must identify casual relationships and regularities to determine the laws that govern reality, which would enable him/her to manipulate reality in line with some purpose.
Human Nature	
Voluntarism ➢ Human beings are completely autonomous and free-willed.	**Determinism** ➢ Human beings and their activities are completely determined by the situation or 'environment' in which they are located.
Methodology	
Ideographic ➢ One can only understand (the social) world by obtaining first-hand knowledge of the subject under investigation. ➢ One has to get close to one's subject and explore its detailed background and 'life' history. ➢ Emphasises the analysis of subjective accounts generated by 'getting inside' situations and involving oneself in the everyday flow of life. ➢ Stresses the importance of letting one's subject unfold its nature and characteristics during a process of investigation.	**Nomothetic** ➢ Emphasises the importance of basing research upon systematic protocol and technique. ➢ Epitomised by the approach and methods employed in the natural sciences. ➢ Focus on the process of testing hypotheses in accordance with the rules and directives pertaining to scientific rigour. ➢ Preoccupied with the construction of scientific tests and the use of quantitative techniques for the analysis of data. ➢ Surveys, questionnaires, personality tests and standardised research instruments of different kinds are prominent tools.

The following analogies can be drawn from the above:

- The four sets of assumptions about social science can be juxtaposed into a polarised 'subjective/objective' dimension. This means that a 'subjective' research approach typically entails a nominalist position with respect to ontology, an anti-positivist approach to epistemology, a voluntarist belief about human nature, and an ideographic approach to methodology.
- An 'objective' approach to research entails a realist position with respect to ontology, a positivist approach to epistemology, a determinist belief about human nature, and a nomothetic approach to methodology.

The following 'ontological assumptions' (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:23), will be upheld for the research in the proposed research study:

- The researcher assumes that the 'explicit knowledge' gleaned from authoritative literature and the 'tacit knowledge' from leaders communicating for transformation would be considered sufficient to make meaningful recommendations in this research study.
- The researcher assumes that the focus in this study on communication for transformation, as situated in any kind of political, industrial or social organisations or with individuals, would facilitate a paradigm shift in the acceptance of the Transformative Communication Concept (TCC), and culminate in an overall adoption of the concept to support leadership communication for transformation, not only to ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but to also result in effective and efficient change dynamics in spite of the challenges of the VUCA world phenomenon.

1.13 RESEARCH CONSTRAINTS

Research constraints (also commonly referred to as 'limitations' and 'de-limitations' of the research) pertain to any inhibiting factor which constrain the researcher's ability to conduct the research in a normal way. According to Collis and Hussey (2009:124-125), 'limitations' identify 'weaknesses' in the research, while 'de-limitations' explain 'how the scope of the study was focused on only one particular area or entity, as opposed to say a wider or

holistic approach". In the opinion of this researcher, no outright constraints could be identified.

As a result, current limitations pertaining to the research are the following:

- The research requires the openness of the leader to objective knowledge, based on solutions gained from critical-rational dialogues with the value of arguments and dialectical transcendence rather than position.
- The selected examples within this thesis describe situations that are based on real-life situations according to public literature, as well as experienced gleaned from personal participation. However, if not publicly published, the mentioning of individual names are avoided.
- The proposed solution in mitigation of the research problem does not represent a ready-made strategy for transformative communication. Rather, it depicts a holistic concept for the individual and further development of one's own leadership strengths, and invites any person to take over responsibility for purposeful structured transformation.

1.14 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis has been structured in such a way as to ensure adherence to the following concepts:

- The concepts presented within the document must flow logically from one part to the next, in order to maximise reader comprehension of the various topics presented.
- Given the diverse nature of the respective literature study interpretations, the order of presentation must be such that the reader is equipped with a deeper understanding of each review interpretation presented.

For the reasons listed above, the individual chapters of this thesis have been grouped together as graphically depicted in Figure 1.2.

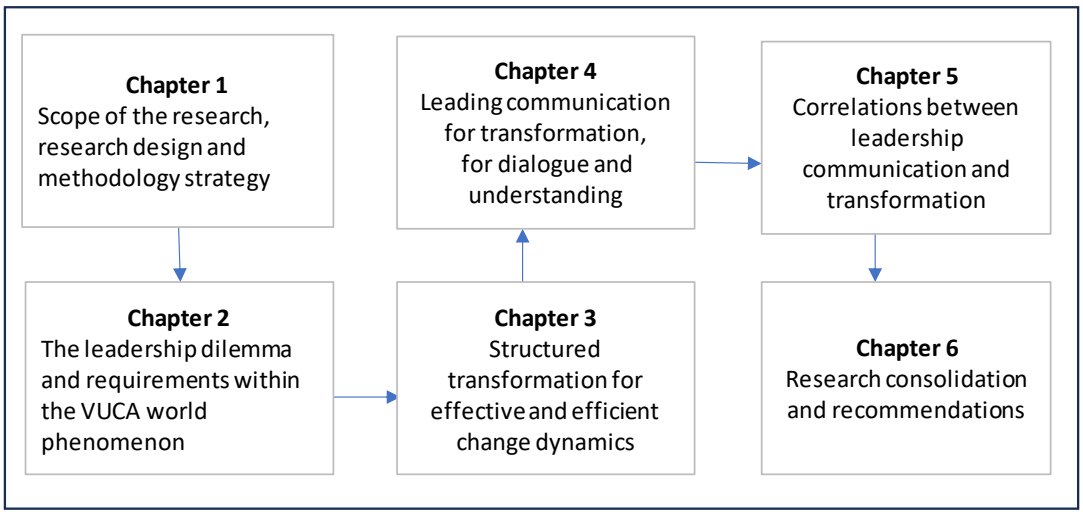

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 1.2: Chapters in context of the overall research.

1.15 CHAPTER AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

A chapter and content analysis drawn from Figure 1.2, return the following:

- **Chapter 1 — Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy:** In this chapter, an overview will be provided on the scope of the research. The research problem will be explained, research questions formulated and key research objectives stated. The research design and data collection methodologies will be expanded upon at a high level.
- **Chapter 2 — The leadership dilemma an requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon:** A detailed analysis of the leadership dilemma within the VUCA world phenomenon will be presented by clarifying the requirements of leadership communication for transformation.
- **Chapter 3 — Ideating the structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics:** In this chapter, communication dynamics based on case examples, which invariably lead to understanding the process for effective and efficient change dynamics, will be analysed and interpreted.
- **Chapter 4 — Leading communication for transformation for dialogue and understanding:** In this chapter, the key elements of

leadership communication for transformation will be expanded upon in detail.

- **Chapter 5 — Correlations of leadership communication for transformation:** In this chapter, the correlations between elements of communication in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics will be elaborated upon.
- **Chapter 6 — Research consolidation and Transformative Communication Concept (TCC):** A detailed analysis of the key construction elements, as gleaned from Chapters 3-5, will be juxtaposed into a specific mitigation approach forming the Transformative Communication Concept (TCC), which will be used to solve the research problem. Additionally, the research will be consolidated and final analogies drawn. Furthermore, the research problem and research questions will be addressed, in terms of the suggested approach.

1.16 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

The envisaged significance of this research study, more specifically as it pertains to the recommendations resulting in a problem-solving guideline, are listed below:

- Purposeful structured leadership communication for transformation.
- Improved dialogue and understanding.
- Effective and efficient change dynamics.
- Contributing to the concept of human flourishing within the context of the VUCA phenomenon.

1.17 CONSOLIDATION

In this chapter, an overview has been provided on the scope of the research. Critical elements required to conduct quality academic research were addressed, inter alia:

- The formulation of the research problem.

- The formulation or the research questions and reciprocal research objectives.
- Statement of the research hypothesis.
- An elaboration on the research design and methodology strategy that would be adhered to during the research.
- Stating of the ontological assumptions that would apply to the research.
- An elaboration on the thesis content and chapter and content analysis.

In the next chapter and in-depth interrogation of the leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon will be conducted.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 2

In this chapter, the leadership dilemma within the VUCA world phenomenon is clarified, by providing an answer to the following secondary research question: What are the leadership dilemmas and requirements due to the VUCA world phenomenon and their value propositions? By implication this chapter would then also meet the requirements set for the associated secondary research objective.

In positioning the research to address the above issues, this chapter provides context to the leadership dilemma within the VUCA world phenomenon, based on literature studies and scientific research, underpinned by examples clarifying the 'actionism' and 'talkism' traps for the transformation efforts.

For this purpose, the dimensions of the leadership dilemma are presented, followed by communication approaches and requirements for transformation. Furthermore, the failure dynamics of transformation are analysed, primarily attributing to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions. In addition, the new value paradigm of transformation is presented as the S-Curve of transformation, which depicts relation-oriented leadership with result-oriented leadership to a new value-oriented dynamic of transformation responsibilities.

More specifically, the proposed chapter and its demarcated parts in context of the overall research is graphically depicted in the Figure 2.1 below.

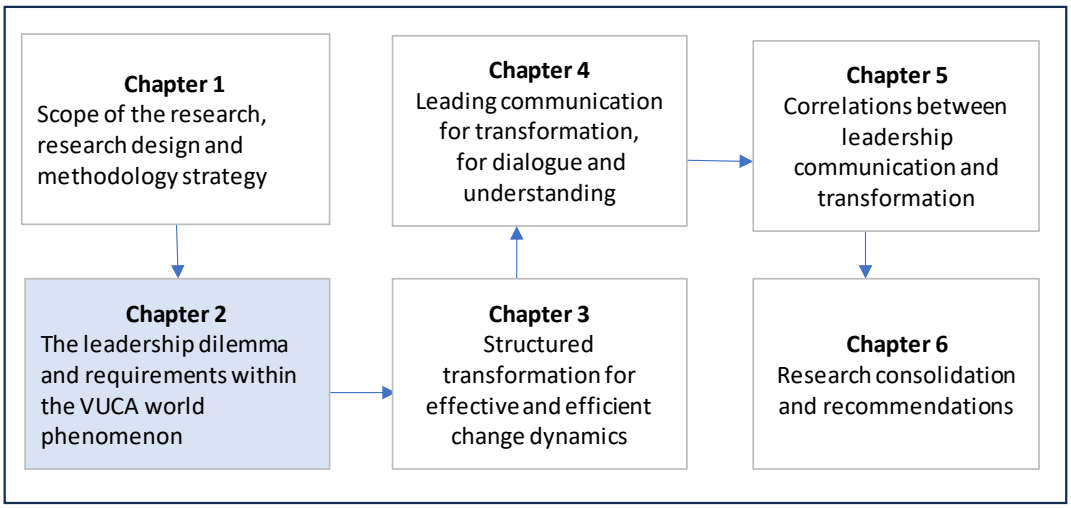

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Figure 2.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This chapter will address (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- The dimensions of the leadership dilemma.
- Communication approaches for transformation.
- Failure dynamics of transformation.
- The value paradigm of transformation
- Leadership requirements and the S-curve of transformation.
- Leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2:
THE LEADERSHIP DILEMMA AND REQUIREMENTS WITHIN THE VUCA WORLD PHENOMENON

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the area of tension between result and relation-oriented leadership, the managerial acronym VUCA, denoting 'volatility', 'uncertainty', 'complexity' and 'ambiguity', can be misinterpreted to serve as catchphrase for, "…Hey, it's crazy out there!" (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014: **Online**). The cited authors believe that, "…VUCA conflates four distinct types of challenges that demand four distinct types of responses", graphically depicted in Figure 2.2 below.

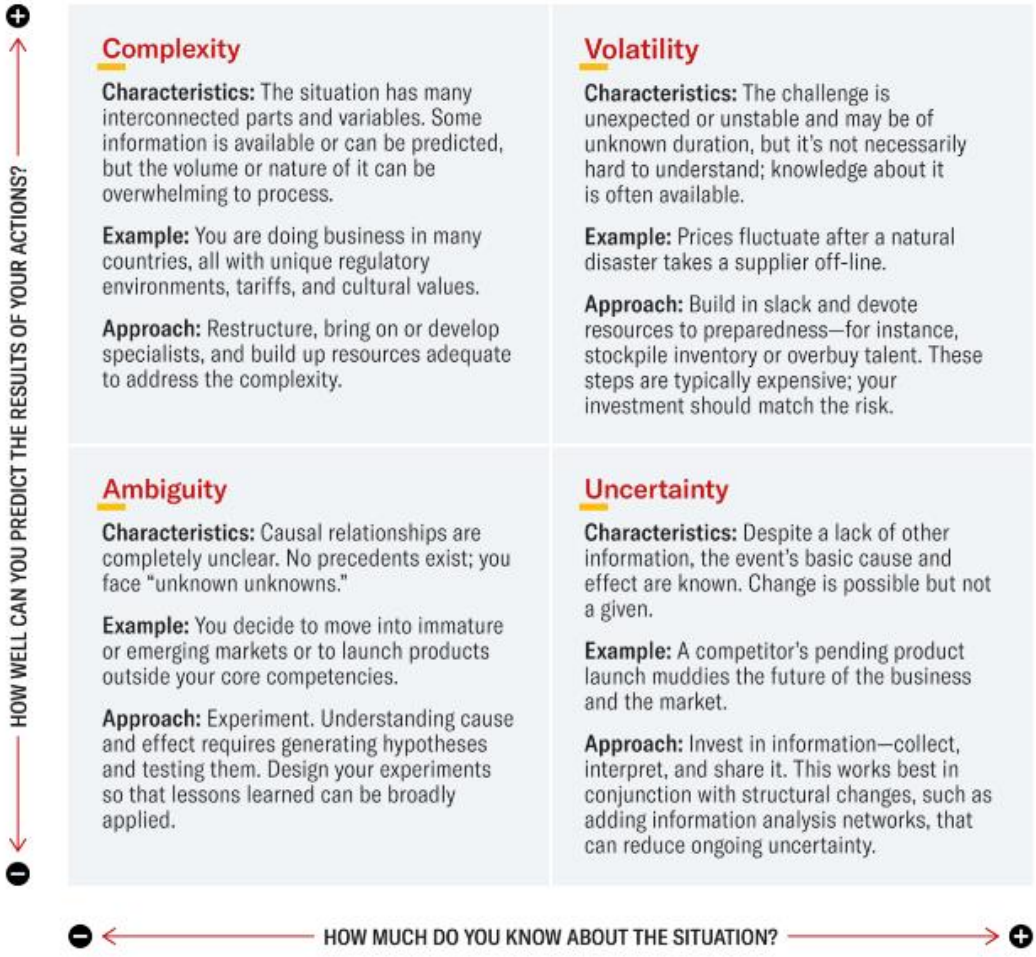

HOW WELL CAN YOU PREDICT THE RESULTS OF YOUR ACTIONS?
Complexity
Characteristics: The situation has many interconnected parts and variables. Some information is available or can be predicted, but the volume or nature of it can be overwhelming to process.
Example: You are doing business in many countries, all with unique regulatory environments, tariffs, and cultural values.
Approach: Restructure, bring on or develop specialists, and build up resources adequate to address the complexity.
Volatility
Characteristics: The challenge is unexpected or unstable and may be of unknown duration, but it's not necessarily hard to understand; knowledge about it is often available.
Example: Prices fluctuate after a natural disaster takes a supplier off-line.
Approach: Build in slack and devote resources to preparedness—for instance, stockpile inventory or overbuy talent. These steps are typically expensive; your investment should match the risk.
Ambiguity
Characteristics: Causal relationships are completely unclear. No precedents exist; you face "unknown unknowns."
Example: You decide to move into immature or emerging markets or to launch products outside your core competencies.
Approach: Experiment. Understanding cause and effect requires generating hypotheses and testing them. Design your experiments so that lessons learned can be broadly applied.
Uncertainty
Characteristics: Despite a lack of other information, the event's basic cause and effect are known. Change is possible but not a given.
Example: A competitor's pending product launch muddies the future of the business and the market.
Approach: Invest in information—collect, interpret, and share it. This works best in conjunction with structural changes, such as adding information analysis networks, that can reduce ongoing uncertainty.
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SITUATION?

Figure 2.2: Framework questions for transformation in a VUCA world phenomenon (**Source:** Bennett and Lemoine (2022: **Online**).

Figure 2.2 above serve as framework for the key issues of transformational efficiencies in a VUCA world phenomenon by 'identifying', 'getting ready for', and 'responding 'to events, in each of the four VUCA categories.

In contrast to this theoretical view from 2014, leadership practice shows that in today's VUCA world, all four areas can be affected at the same time, for example through a war as discussed in Chapter 1. To continue with the examples selected by Bennett and Lemoine (2014: **Online**), it is entirely conceivable in a globalised world that a company is active in different countries including emerging markets and is currently faced with high price fluctuations, and tough competition due to war.

2.2 THE DIMENSIONS OF THE LEADERSHIP DILEMMA

Transformation in a VUCA world is a supreme discipline of leadership in the area of tension between humanity and professionalism. The success of transformation efforts lies in the combination of relationship-oriented and result-oriented leadership communication. However, this does not mean a compromise, but rather a 'tightrope walk' in the VUCA world, the achievement of a third quality that challenges all the senses, as will be discussed further on in this chapter. The two questions graphically presented as a framework in Figure 2.2 (above), depict the basic dimensions of the leadership dilemma in a VUCA world, as follows:

- **Relation-Oriented:** How much is known about the situation?
- **Result-Oriented:** How predictable are the results of actions?

The logical (scientific) starting point for this approach is the research findings of the so-called Ohio studies. Within the ambit of these studies, a 'Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire' (LBDQ), was formulated, which aimed to record leadership behaviour for the first time in the 1950s. Based on the results of a series of such studies, a distinction can be made between the two main dimensions of leadership behaviour (Nerdinger, 2019:101-103), which returned the following:

- **Consideration:** Warmth, trust, friendliness, respect for employees, presented in the further designs as a relation-oriented dimension of leadership.
- **Initiation Structure:** Task-related organisation, structuring, activation and control, presented in the further designs as a result-oriented dimension of leadership.

The more recent 'action control theory' by Kuhl (1994:251), also identifies clear differences in dealing with pressure to change, and distinguishes between the two dimensions of 'action-orientation' versus 'position-orientation', which are elaborated upon below:

- People with a 'position-orientated mindset' engage in recurring thoughts and explain their past, present or future with their situation. Under pressure to change, the ability to act is particularly restricted. In practice, as observed by the author of this thesis, this mindset can be recognised by an increased need to talk and explain events of the past.
- People with an 'action-oriented mindset' on the other hand, have the ability to act under unfavourable situations. However, under pressure to change, they tend to be pure actionists, especially when they are perceived to be unsuccessful. In practice, according to the author of this thesis', this mindset can be recognised in un-reflected decisions and quiet solo efforts.

2.3 COMMUNICATION APPROACHES FOR TRANSFORMATION

Communication is first and foremost a 'thinking process', in which individuation and socialisation are 'thought together' and then 'brought together'. It combines authenticity with appreciation, self-protection with understanding, steadfastness with empathy, and dialogue. Communication involves the art of asserting one's own responsibility in change actions (result-oriented), with all the conflicts that arise and still doing justice to the other person (relation-oriented). Leadership communication and transformation can start in three different places, based on the

communication psychology of Schulz von Thun (2022a:22), as elaborated upon below:

- **Approach to an individuum, personal approach:** An approach to an individuum, or a personal approach means changing one's own situation or the situation of a single person. Here, analogous to humanistic psychology, there is the opportunity to perfect underdeveloped areas of the personality and to enable the individual to become more and more the master of themselves. In Paragraph 2.4.1 below, an example to show the personal way an employee works, as well as the lack of leadership from their superior is elaborated upon. Controversially, there is a danger of looking for the causes of a disorder only in the individual. What remains unnoticed by this approach is that a disruptive employee is perhaps just the most noticeable symptom of a disturbed relationship between the supervisor and the employee or employees. This expansion of the perspectives leads to the second approach expanded upon below.
- **Approach to the organizational interaction of people:** The disorder does not arise from a single person, but from the interactive behaviour of a group. The important aspect to note about this is that certain forms of behaviour may not be subject to the free design of the actors, but rather may be dictated 'from above', so to speak. The example in the following chapter (see Paragraph 2.4.2), focuses on a police operation to find a lioness in Berlin. This further expansion of the field of vision leads to the third approach expanded upon below.
- **Approach to structure and societal conditions:** What seems worthy of change here is neither the individual nor the interaction between several people, but rather the rules under which people come together and that impose or at least suggest ways of dealing with them. Complex tax laws, which on the one hand requires the declaration to be accurate, but at the same time relies on the clarity of the rules, can make the correct execution of the tax declaration and also the understanding of tax audits or fiscal court cases impossible for all those involved, as evidenced with first-hand experience. Larger institutions may require institutional transformation measures, or if it turns out that the institution

corresponds to the inevitable logic of the social system, a fundamental socio-political reorientation at the political level. The current political situation in Germany, which is elaborated upon in the next chapter, is publicly referred to as 'Lost in Transformation', serves as an example. Again, this method is also related to the first two approaches. How should a leader, in politics as well as business and society, advocate for change in a credible and trustworthy way, without starting with themselves and in a small circle of immediate reach?

All three communication approaches are underpinned with examples to further interrogate the failure dynamics of transformation in Paragraph 2.4 below

2.4 FAILURE DYNAMICS OF TRANSFORMATION ANALYSED (EXAMPLES)

When large problems remain unsolved and proposed solutions create new problems, the feeling of 'lost in transformation' arises, and it is understandable that people as a result, become wary of change. It may sound simple, but the best way to allay these fears is through successful transformation.

Change management has become a recognised subject of study and the research publication of Peter Drucker (Drucker, 1954), on the basics of management, represent an important impetus thereto. The differences and overlaps between management and leadership have also been widely discussed. For the purpose of this research, the following perspective distinguishes between 'management' and 'leadership', namely:

- Leadership builds or transforms systems.
- Management operates within a system and keeps it working.

At the core of leadership and management challenges, is the fact that issues primarily attributed to the impact of the VUCA world phenomenon, grow

seemingly faster than the underpinning skillsets, as demonstrated by the following examples:

- **'Transformation-Talkism':** The personal-development conversation.
- **'Transformation-Actionism':** The lion is a wild boar.
- **'Transformation-Dilemma':** Lost in transformation.

2.4.1 Individual example: The personal development conversation

While the PE-Engineering company situated in Bavaria Germany is relatively small, it is important to the management team to have implemented structured personnel development with qualified feedback at least once a year. Both superiors and employees prepare for these development communiqués using a structured questionnaire. One of the criteria, is meeting deadlines for goals and tasks. The aim of the communication is nothing less than an individual change in the performance of work, so that deadlines can be met in the future.

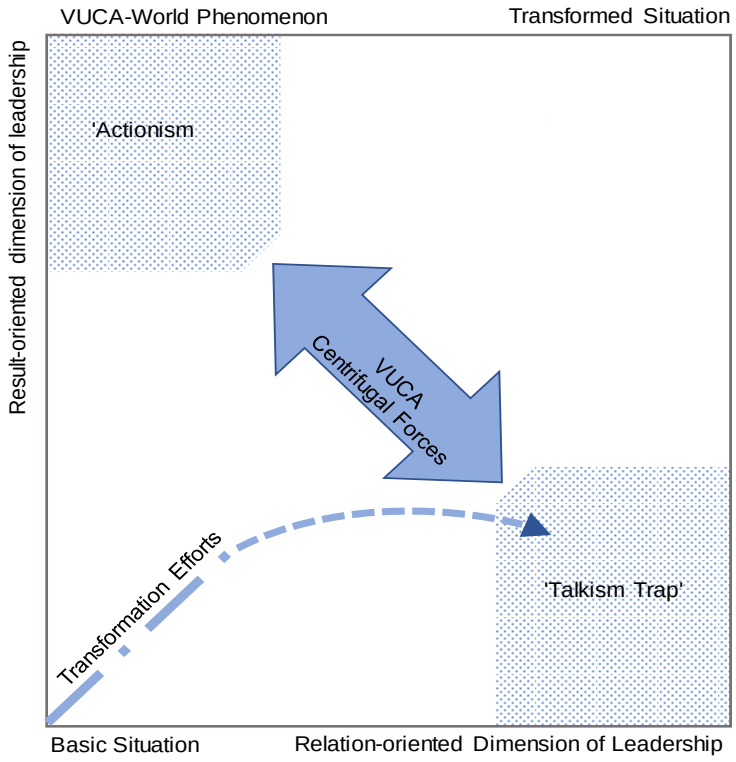
In this leadership example, when asked about the difficulties in meeting deadlines, the employees justify themselves by raising numerous reasons such as a heavy workload, the impact of the Corona virus, that the IT did not comply with required uptimes, and that incumbents more often than not had to fulfil special requests from customers. During the entire remaining time of the interview, the reasons why task deadlines could not be met are explained in great detail. The superior did listens in a relaxed manner to all the complaints, without taking control of the conversation. The outcome culminated in both parties to the communiqué being happy about the harmony achieved, and agree that, "…everything would be better henceforth". With this new status quo, the next meeting about personnel development is happily arranged.

Interpretation: The Talkism-Trap

"Change" in the experience of this author is a favourite topic for controversial discussions in politics, business, and society, as well as the associated declaration of good intentions. The issue of 'adhering to time limits' is a

classic mechanism used in personnel management, as there are always numerous reasons for not meeting agreed deadlines. However, these impacts are usually already known when the deadline is agreed upon, so it is not significant news, but rather a direct result of the VUCA world phenomenon.

The crux of the issue, without serious personal insight from an employee or employees, nor serious personal leadership from the superior, is that there remains ineffective declarations of intent, culminating in inefficient and ineffective 'talkism', no matter how many rounds of discussions are being held. The transformation design graphically depicted in Design 2.1 below, follow on from the above, and depicts a development line that veers directly towards 'talkism'.



Design 2.1: Failure dynamic of transformation: Talkism Trap (**Source:** Own source).

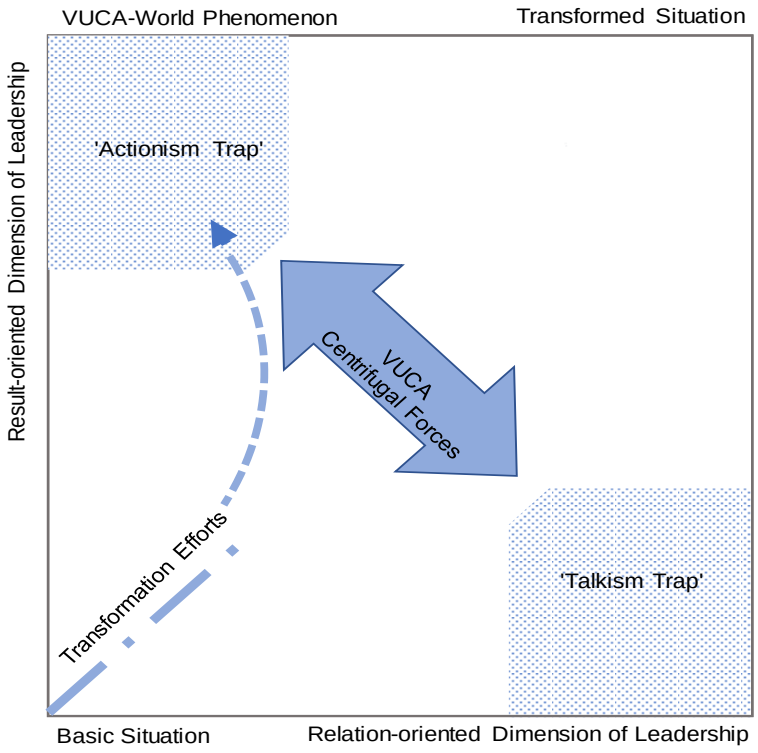
2.4.2 Organisation Example: The lion is a wild boar

It was a quiet summer Thursday night when the news reached the police: A lioness had been videoed eating in the Kleinmachnow forest near Berlin, however there are as a rule, no lions in the forests in Germany. According to Gschoßmann (2023: **Online**), the senior police director activated 200 officers with weapons, as well as hunters and dogs. Thirty hours later, after no signs of the lioness had been found, wildlife experts were called in. They examined the night-time images and compared them with images of lionesses. The conclusion drawn was that the animal on the video was not a lioness, but rather a wild boar (Tagesschau, 2023: **Online**).

Interpretation: The Actionism trap

From the example cited above, which is reflective of a highly volatile, uncertain, complex and perhaps also ambiguous situation, the actions of the local police director points to the 'VUCA phenomenon in its purest form'. The situation, the responsibility of the police, and the goal was unequivocally clear, namely that, 'the lioness must be eradicated'.

In the dispensation described above, the opportunity to 'prove performance' was clearly evident. However, none of the incumbents involved in the action knew the real facts (namely that the animal was not a lioness but a wild boar). How would they be able to unequivocally determine if it was really a lioness captured on video?



Design 2.2: Failure dynamic of transformation: Actionism Trap (**Source:** Own source).

While it took humility to question the initial assessment, in so doing, the grandly conceived transformation action leads to 'empty' actionism. Design 2.2 graphically depicts a line of development that quickly turns towards actionism

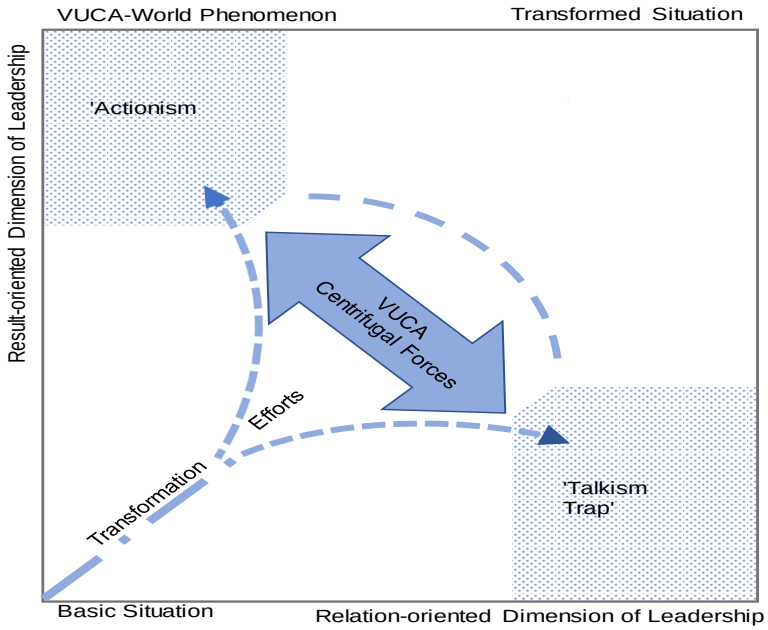
2.4.3 Structural Example: Lost in Transformation

From a German perspective, the German Balance Sheet is a proverbial disaster: Digitalisation is faltering, the energy transition has failed, the infrastructure is failing, and the migration crisis highly controversial. Germany, as an industrial country is internationally dependent on oil from Russia, on military protection from the USA, and on products from China. Furthermore, the Germans have experienced political calendar events in the past few years in a decidedly undecided manner, without any normative claims, compass or goal. The logic analogy, which can be drawn from this is that Germany will only change if the Germans do not have to change, which of course is an optic illusion.

The political coalition made up of the SPD (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland), the Greens and the FDP (Freie Demokratische Partei) is therefore happy to agree with the Germans' willingness to change. They are united by heroic pathos in the face of a nation in need of recovery. In response, Chancellor Scholz undertook to execute on the most urgent and overdue issues, to carry out the necessary modernisation, to address the various upheavals, and to initiate the necessary innovation. A year and a half later, the Germans wish to move, however continue to do so without anything being changed. They are stuck in a 'mental lockdown' as stated in a Wirtschaftswoche conclusion (Schnaas, 2023:14-22).

Interpretation: Lost in Transformation

The above dispensation in Germany serves as a special example of the complexity of VUCA phenomena applied to a political orientated reality. Everything that traditionally defines leadership is present, in that there are topics, goals, and visions. However, in the relation-oriented 'fight' for votes, and the result-oriented need for transformation success, the central part of transformation of the political system is immobilised, due to a lack of know-how, as well as a lack of resources.



Design 2.3: Failure dynamic of transformation: Lost in transformation (**Source:** Own source).

Based on the above example, Design 2.3 graphically depicts a straight-line reflecting transformation efforts, which are being 'caught' at the centre between ineffective actionism and inefficient talkism.

While it can be argued that the failure of transformation efforts can be attributed to a varied number of valid VUCA world phenomena, many of the failures occur as a result of the limitations in leadership communication, as can be identified by the following 'weaknesses' shown in the above examples:

- One extreme is talkism with no adequate action at all (see Paragraph 2.4.1).
- It can be highlighted that actionism, coupled with critical errors in any of the phases (such as failing to ask an important question), can have a devastating impact, causing high and ineffective expenses without adequate results when, for example, the lioness is proved to be a wild boar (see Paragraph 2.4.2).
- Dismissing the important steps of background knowledge and the clarification of problems, create the illusion of speed, which in turn leads to high expectations (as is seen in the German government), without deeper knowledge and ultimately unsatisfactory decisions and results (see Paragraph 2.4.3).

Mistakes are not inevitable. With leadership awareness and communication skills, transformation failure can be avoided or at least mitigated to a certain extent. The key is understanding the dynamic balance during a transformation process with an effective and efficient structure, and in addition, applying leadership communication that ensures understanding and high motivation for purposeful actions.

2.5 THE NEW VALUE PARADIGM OF TRANSFORMATION

The basic understanding of dialectical balance between values is historical, which can be mapped to Aristotle (ca. 350 BC). In the nineteenth century the German philosopher Hegel developed the consciousness of the

'synthesis of opposites', resulting from dynamic interactions (Hegel, 2018:18-19 and 2018:103-131). This dialectical approach was further developed into a value square by Nicolai Hartmann (1926), and adopted for psychology by Paul Helwig (1936). The communication psychologist Friedemann Schulz von Thun (1989) expanded the value square into a development square, describing it as a ‘tool of the mind’ for resolving opposites, contradictions, dilemmas, and polarisations (Schulz von Thun, 2022b:49).

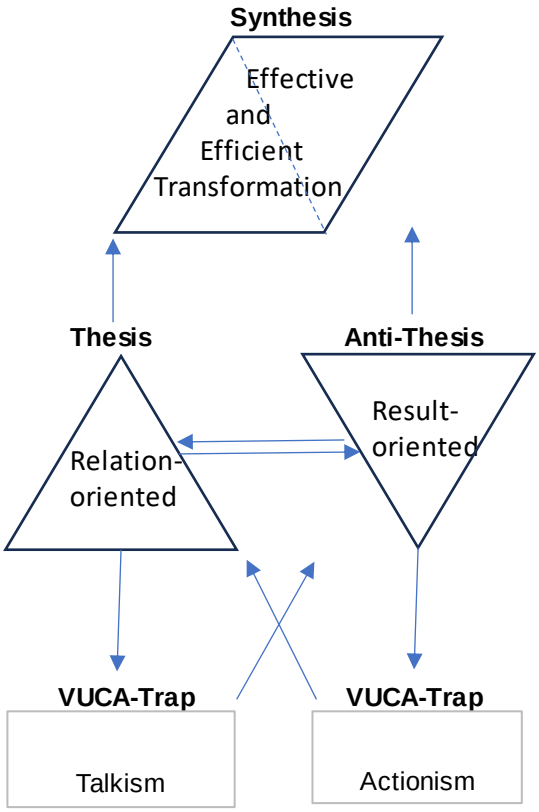
The dialectical balance of values between the two dimensions of leadership, relation-orientation as counter-value to result-orientation, shows the mutual dynamic of the leadership dilemma, with the conclusion that too much of a good thing (value) is harmful and finally devaluated as a VUCA-trap:

- Action-orientation is an important leadership value for transformation’, ‘actionism’ is a harmful trap.
- Relation-orientation is an important leadership value for transformation’, ‘talkism’ is a harmful trap.

Applied from the perspective of leadership experience of the author of this research, transformation efforts are not about guiding bad actions into good actions. Instead, the focus of the dynamic leadership interactions is on guiding exaggerated ‘actionism’ or too small actions due to ‘talkisms’, toward the synthesised elements that should serve as a complement necessarily for transforming to the next level. This understanding of the dialectical balance in leadership for transformation is a value-oriented paradigm shift, serving as the basic guideline for the change dynamics of leadership communication.

Design 2.4, graphically depicts the new value paradigm of leadership communication for transformation. In the middle of the design are the relation-oriented and result-oriented dimensions of leadership as counter-values according to the development square of Schulz von Thun (2008:32). These leadership values, if exaggerated, are devaluated to the VUCA traps of ‘talkism’ or ‘actionism’ due to the complexity of the VUCA-world

phenomenon. On the other hand, combined with Hegel's dialectic and the dynamic interactions of thesis and anti-thesis, a new configuration is generated, that both include and transcends the fundamental dimensions of relation-oriented leadership (thesis) and result-oriented leadership (anti-thesis), to a synthesis for effective and efficient transformation.



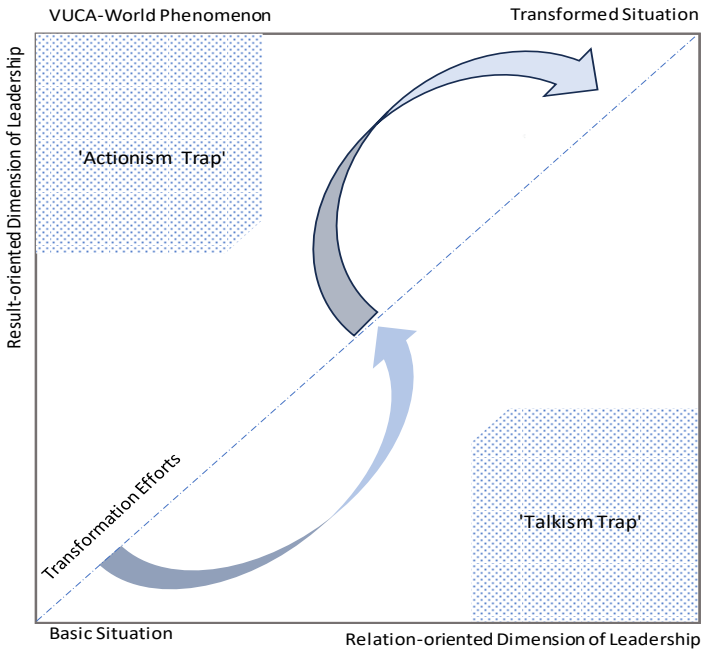
Design 2.4: The new value paradigm of leadership communication for transformation (**Source:** Own source).

This new value paradigm of leadership communication for transformation maps to the elementary dialectical thinking of thesis and antithesis, which strive for synthesis, and thus generate a new, higher-order configuration, forming a dialectical transformation key to build a communicative bridge in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous situations. The value paradigm for transformation, recognising VUCA dispensations and subsequent transformation efforts, lies in a third perspective, namely a dynamic quality, a transformation success, that is based on the continuous integration of relations and results. Transformation efforts are not about tepid

compromises, but rather about higher professionalism and human quality of knowledge as the basis for game-changing visions and successful actions. The value of communication for transformation represents therefore a different leadership mind-set to a new value proposition, namely that of a third dimension between the VUCA centrifugal forces.

2.6 LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND S-CURVE OF TRANSFORMATION

Considering the new value paradigm between the two dimensions of leadership, which are subjected to the pressure of the VUCA world phenomenon, the efficient and effective transformation journey can be shown as a S-Curve, which depicts relation-oriented leadership with result-oriented leadership to a new value-oriented dynamic of transformation responsibilities. This leadership approach, for avoiding the Actionism Trap as well as the Talkism Trap, is graphically depicted as a S-Curve (See Design 2.5 below).



Design 2.5: Leadership requirements for Transformation within the VUCA world phenomenon (**Source:** Own source).

The interpretation that can be attributed to this dispensation returns the following requirements for leading transformation within the VUCA-world phenomenon:

- Leading transformation successfully starts with people and relations that are strong enough to overcome sources of inertia with understanding and dialog.

- Completing a transformation successfully means that result-oriented actions start only after the specific problems and goals in the centre of the VUCA-World phenomenon are clarified and structured for effective and efficient change dynamics.

This interpretation of the examples is further underpinned by the Offix CEO Martin Kelterborn, a trader for office-materials after his personal VUCA-experience following a hacker-attack, and who is of the opinion that, "…we first need a clear assessment of the situation" (free translation from the German by the author of this research) (Fischer, Hielscher, Kuhn, Rau & Salz, 2023:21).

2.7 CONCLUSION: LEADERSHIP DILEMMA AND REQUIREMENTS WITHIN THE VUCA WORLD PHENOMENON

In this chapter, the leadership dilemma within the VUCA world phenomenon has been clarified and the following research question has been answered: What are the leadership dilemmas and requirements due to the VUCA world phenomenon and their value propositions? Furthermore, the dilemmas of leadership communication not facilitating transforming dynamics have been explained and primarily attributed to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions.

In positioning the research to address the above issues, this chapter furthermore, has provided context to the leadership dilemma within the VUCA world phenomenon, based on literature studies and scientific

research, underpinned by examples clarifying the ‘actionism’ and ‘talkism’ traps associated with transformation efforts. Furthermore, to meet the curtailing demands of the VUCA world phenomenon with effective and efficient change dynamics, leadership requirements were designed to reflect as a S-Curve.

It is of importance to note that the transformation process does not start with actions. Instead, the success of transformation depends on the information and decisions taken ahead of any change. Acceptance of relationship-oriented leadership and result-oriented action quality, acts in unison as the driving force of transformation, according to the new dialectic value paradigm of transformation.

In the next chapter the structured transformation process with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon will be addressed.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 3

In this chapter, the researcher endeavours to ideate an answer to the research question that reads: What structured transformation process can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics?" In so doing by implication, this chapter would then also meet the requirements set for the associated secondary research objective.

Based on the transformation areas gleaned from Chapter 2, transformational models were described with further aspects stimulating transformative activity, through the utilisation of examples culminating into an ideated transformation structure. For the purpose of actuality of this research, the structural transformation area was expanded upon to include:

- Personal transformation.
- Organisational transformation.
- Social transformation.
- Environmental transformation.
- Technological transformation.

More specifically, the proposed chapter and its demarcated parts in context of the overall research are graphically depicted in Figure 3.1. below.

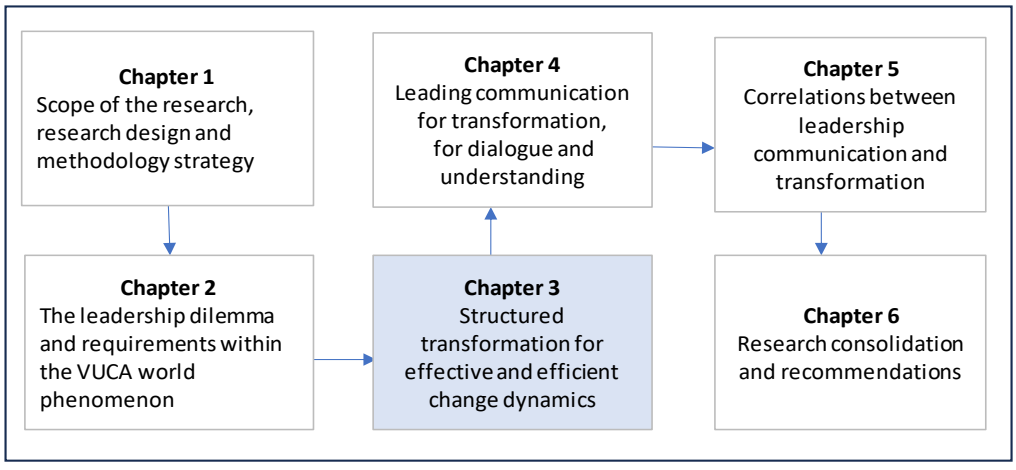

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 3.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This chapter will address (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- Transformation models.
- Areas and impulses for transformation.
- Examples for structured transformation.
- Analysing the examples for structured transformation.
- Structured transformation and leadership.

CHAPTER 3
STRUCTURED TRANSFORMATION FOR EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT CHANGE DYNAMICS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

“When God spoke, He transformed chaos, and created the world”. Transformation, by its very nature is life, from which the obvious analogy can be drawn that, ‘there is no life without transformation’. While nature itself is constantly changing, this applies even more to human life. The mere fact of growing in years is an example of transformation in human life, such as changes in appearance, ideally in connection with a growth in knowledge and experience.

Disruption in turn, is the opposite, and points to ‘destruction’. Transformation is creation, which can be built on disruption. Transformation within the purpose of this research describes the major change from a basic dispensation, to a transformed dispensation, on the premis of a positive desire to shape things for the benefit of all those involved.

The fundamental purpose of transformation is defined as, “…a change or alteration, especially a radical one” (Collins English Dictionary, 2022: **Online**), i.e. a fundamental change to the previous dispensation. Be it in individual personnel development within a company, an institutional danger situation for a police operation, or the transformation of a society, transformation refers to a significant and profound change or metamorphosis that occur at a personal, organisational, societal, environmental or technological levels. It involves a fundamental shift in the way things are perceived, understood, and operated, leading to a substantial and lasting transformation of the individual, system, or environment.

The importance of ‘efficiency’ in a transformation process is due to the fact that human, as well as financial or material resources are limited. It is

therefore critical that resources invested in the process are used optimally and waste is limited, leading to timely and cost-efficient achievement of the desired chance objectives. ‘Effectiveness’ in turn takes into account the broader impact and strategic alignment of the transformation efforts. An effective transformation process focuses on achieving meaningful and impactful changes that align with further strategic directions and long-term success.

Therefore, although naturally part of life, transformation remains a challenge. Every change not only costs time, but also money and, above all, mental effort and anticipation. This is what creates the value paradigm and recognition for successful transformation. Leading for transformation remains one of the supreme disciplines in leadership science.

3.2 TRANSFORMATION MODELS

The following provides an overview of transformation models, as it relates to personal transformation, organisational transformation and social transformation.

3.2.1 Personal transformation

One of the most fascinating leaders to this day is Jesus, combining life on Earth and spiritual myth. In a conversation with the Pharisee Nicodemus, Jesus connects faith with the transformation to eternal life. In this respect according to the Holy Bible (2011: **John 3:16**), “…For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”. The Roman Paul, who initially persecuted Christians as Saul, described in his second letter to the Corinthians the transformative effect of faith in Jesus Christ in one sentence, that reads, “…If someone belongs to Christ, he is a new creature” (Holy Bible, 2011: **2. Corinthians 5:17**).

Joseph Campbell, writing in 1949 after the end of the Second World War, combined and compared the myths and legends of many cultures with modern psychology, to explain the story of his 'hero'. It can be viewed universally that myths, fairy tales and dreams show common structural elements and stages.

The hero's transformation journey leads through great shifts of separation, descent, ordeal and return, a total of 17 stages metaphorically for deep inner transformation. These stages are summarised in three phases, an understanding that it is repeated in later transformation models. According to Campbell, these phases include 'separation-initiation-return' (Campbell, 2008:23). As with Jesus and the disciple Paul, transformation for Campbell also means something extraordinary; transformation happens outside the everyday (common world) and requires courage. Encounters are both supportive and dangerous, and are relevant to the course of the transformation.

In Campbell's writing, the variety of encounters is particularly impressive. They range from God, dragons and girls (Campbell, 2008:23ff), to the supernatural aid (Campbell 2008:57ff), several monsters and a whale (Campbell 2008:74), the Goddess (Campbell 2008:91), Woman (Campbell 2008:101), to the Father (Campbell 2008:105).

Campbell concludes the current problem of mankind, which is precisely the opposite to that of men of those co-ordinating mythologies, "…where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there now is darkness. The modern hero-deed must be that of questing to bring to light again the lost Atlantis of the co-ordinated soul" (Campbell, 2008:334).

The transtheoretical model for accompanying personal transformation, presented by Prochaska and DiClement in 1983, is considered the initiator of the dynamic stage models (Moser, 2014:214). Using the example of trying to quit smoking, the integrative model of Prochaska and DiClement (1983:390-395), includes four different change phases that are

conceptualised as a temporal sequence and differ significantly in quality as elaborated upon below:

- **Precontemplation:** A specific situation is not seen as a problem.
- **Contemplation:** Thinking more about a problem.
- **Action:** For actively changing behaviour and environment.
- **Maintenance:** Continuing to emphasise counterconditioning and stimulus-control processes.

Prochaska and DiClement (1983:394), came to the conclusion that rather than, "…emotional experiences moving people to act, the results suggest that it is a combined cognitive/affective re-evaluation process that carries over from contemplation into action". From this perspective it is that pro and con arguments are weighed against each other in every phase, whereby change means a permanent conflict situation. According to Moser (2014:214), such models enable stage-appropriate communication content to be applied depending on the transformation stage.

3.2.2 Organisational transformation

While the previous models describe personal phases for change, Organisational Development (OD) or Personnel Development (PD), describe a field of practice and research that focuses on improving the effectiveness and performance of organisations in which conception responsibility and implementation responsibility lie within the same group of people (Nerdinger, 2019:180). Typically, consultants are called in to provide advice and oversight. The transformation develops in terms of a systematic approach to managing and implementing changes within an organisation to enhance its overall effectiveness, adaptability, and ability to achieve its goals.

John P. Kotter, focused on economic organisations, which he presented in 1995 as an eight-stage process, to create major change from an entrepreneurial leadership perspective (Kotter, 2012:23 and 36-168). Against the background of transformation failures, Kotter defines the

following eight steps for major change (Kotter, 1985:23 and 36-168), as follows:

- Establishing a sense of urgency.
- Creating the guiding coalition.
- Developing a vision and strategy.
- Communicating the change vision.
- Empowering employees for broad-based action.
- Generating short-term wins.
- Consolidating gains and producing more change.
- Anchoring new approaches in the culture.

3.2.3 Social transformation

In 1947, following World War II, Kurt Lewin developed a three-phase model in an effort to resolve social conflicts in Germany and enable democracy (Lewin, 1947a:5-40. Lewin's approach was a change from a hostile attitude to a friendly stance towards the new system, choosing group dynamics as his preferred method to effect change.

Lewin (Lewin 1947b:34-35), described the three phases of change in social groups with the terms 'thawing', 'moving' and 'freezing'. The meaning of these terms are expanded upon below:

- **Level 1:** 'Thawing', includes preparing for change, such as: Analysis, information and discussion.
- **Level 2:** 'Moving', involves making actual changes, including taking responsibility, training and monitoring processes.
- **Level 3:** 'Freezing', means stabilising the change. Falling back into old structures and behaviours should be avoided.

Lewin emphasised that each level has its own field of force and the importance of securing each reached level against relapses. From Lewin's perspective, catharsis is also necessary to eliminate prejudices. This can also be of an emotional nature in order to break down existing structures of self-righteousness or complacency.

3.2.4 Analogies drawn from transformation models

The following analogy can be drawn from the above overview of transformation models, as it relates to personal transformation, organisational transformation and social transformation:

- Transformation consists of several stages from at least three phases to 8 or 17 stages, except for the special situation of immediate transformation in one step through personal faith.
- The encounters, both supportive and threatening, are relevant to the course of the transformation.
- Newer models emphasize temporal sequencing (Bartunek and Woodmann, 2015:157-182 and Prochaska and Di Clemente, 1983:390-395), and the conscious selection of communication elements appropriate to the respective stage.
- Organisational development additionally places emphasis on effectiveness.

3.3 AREAS AND IMPULSES FOR TRANSFORMATION

Based on the communication approaches for transformation expanded upon above (Personal - refer Paragraph 3.2.1, Organisational - refer Paragraph 3.2.2, and Social - refer Paragraph 3.2.3,), this author specifically expanded and selected the following areas for transformation from a VUCA perspective for further investigation:

- Personal transformation.
- Organisational transformation.
- Social transformation.
- Environmental transformation.
- Technological transformation.

Comparable to the learning organisations and innovation processes described by Nerdinger (2019:186-189), transformation processes require ‘an impulse’. This transformation impulse can be both ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’.

Regarding the motivational effect of intrinsic or extrinsic stimuli, Petty and Cacioppo (1986:193), differentiated in their Elaboration-Likelihood Model, two qualitatively different routes to persuasion, namely:

- **The central route:** The recipient is made to think and is ideally convinced by arguments from the situation.
- **The peripheral route:** The emotional world of the recipient is addressed; the status, sympathy and characteristics of the speaker are also relevant.

The 'central route' and the 'peripheral route' both control the depth of processing and the extent of reflection, i.e., the affectedness that is important for change. Petty and Cacioppo (1986:193-195), also show that a change in attitude (persuasion), that comes about centrally through one's own reflection is more permanent, and therefore more profound than one that occurs through peripheral or heuristic processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986:193- 195). Depending on the transformation area, both impulse options can be considered, as shown in the examples in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Examples of intrinsic and extrinsic impulses for transformation (**Source:** Own source).

Area of Transformation	Example Intrinsic Impulses	Example Extrinsic Impulses
Personal	In order to have more endurance in everyday working life, the aim is to increase your own fitness.	A life-threatening illness forces Otto Buchinger to change his lifestyle.
Organisational	The IHK increases the success of its corporate members through a self-transforming network.	Legal requirements demand the proof of a waste concept.
Social	A private initiative Seehaus e.V. dares to reform the way young offenders are re-socialised within family structures.	Newer criminal law regulations enable juvenile detention in family-like structures for effective resocialisation.
Environmental	The agro-forester Tony Rinaudo innovates and transforms the way cleared areas are reforested.	Severe famine in Niger (1984) leads to a global response for reforestation to curb desertification.
Technological	XELLAR production systems are revolutionising specialised machine construction in line with the demand for "green, lean and digital" solutions.	Digital transformation is forcing companies to transform their business models.

While intrinsic and extrinsic impulses and motivation are presented as opposite pairs in theory as demonstrated above, leadership examples show that the combination of both paths, taking both variables into account, is particularly sustainable in practice. The above perspective of this researcher is underpinned by two examples as reflected in Table 3.1 above, namely:

- **Social area:** While the private initiative Seehaus e.V. reforms juvenile detention, newer criminal law regulations are transformed to supports these initiatives for sustainable social transformation.
- **Environmental area:** While agro-forester Toni Rinaudo has strong intrinsic motives for adapting his method, the underpinning motivation is supported by extrinsic impulses due to severe famine in Niger, causing a global response.

In the cited examples, transformation implies a significant and lasting change, and more often than not, involves a degree of complexity or difficulty in the process, as transformation is often characterised by its comprehensive nature and lasting impact in dealing with people, situations, and organisations. As highlighted above, the combination of intrinsic and extrinsic impulses has a reinforcing effect on significant behavioural change and related change actions.

3.4 EXAMPLES OF STRUCTURED TRANSFORMATION

The attention of the reader is drawn to the referencing regime used in this paragraph to point to relevant examples cited in Paragraph 3.5, where letters **A-C** and numbers **1-6** are shown in square brackets for example **[A-1]**.

3.4.1 Personal transformation

Personal transformation brings about a deep and meaningful change that takes place within an individual. Reciprocally, as the following example of

Otto Buchinger demonstrates, it can include a shift in attitudes, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and perspectives, as well as personal values.

Example 3.4.1: Fasting — Winning by foregoing

According to Dr Francoise Wilhelmi de Toledo, an advocate for fasting, "…we live in a time in which the over-nourished people have overtaken the undernourished people in number" (Wilhelmi, 2020:11). The grandfather of this author's husband, described this excess in 1909 as, "…a basic national evil". Otto Buchinger survived the First World War, incapacitated for board or garrison duty as an invalid, walking with two canes and with a barely functioning liver. In September 1917, he fell ill with lacunar tonsillitis with septic rheumatism [refer **A-1**, Paragraph 3.5], and narrowly escaped death (Knock, 2022: **Online**).

As a corps student, bars and political combat speeches shaped Buchinger's everyday life, and left him with an aversion to the drinking habits that were common of the time (today 'binge drinking'). Buchinger began to deal with questions of life reform, monism, asceticism and socialism [refer **A-2**, Paragraph 3.5]. Tropical hygiene and life reform were the topics of his lectures, which he initially published under a pseudonym 'O. Wanderer', equivalent to the English term, 'wanderer' (Mettenleiter, 2002:496).

Being awarded with the title of 'Naval Surgeon General' in 1918, Buchinger was released from active service. A cure in the Wiesbaden officers' convalescent home was unsuccessful and plunged Buchinger into deep despair about his future existence [refer **B-1**, Paragraph 3.5].

He then decided [refer **B-2**, Paragraph 3.5], on the 'most concentrated form of naturopathy' (Wilhelmi, 2020:19), in order to gain his life through voluntary renunciation. Buchinger activated his powers of self-healing with a fasting cure with Dr. Gustav Riedlin (1862–1949) in Freiburg, following the motto: "If hunger is the best cook, fasting is the best doctor" (Wilhelmi 2020:19).

In addition to exercise, meditation and adoration (Wilhelmi, 2020:54), Buchinger saw reflection on the meaning of life and worship as essential to successful fasting [refer **C-1**, Paragraph 3.5]. His ideas about fasting encompassed a holistic view, in which a person was considered in their physical, mental and spiritual aspects.

After this formative self-healing [refer **C-2**, Paragraph 3.5] experience, Buchinger increasingly devoted his further work to the development of the therapeutic fasting method named after him. This supports both the prevention of and healing of physical and mental illnesses. The aim is to regain or consciously preserve quality of life, performance and inner harmony.

On his 75th birthday in 1953, Buchinger, who was so often rejected due to his controversial approach, was made an honorary citizen of the city of Bad Pyrmont. His Buchinger Clinic is continued by the family of his son Otto to this day. His youngest daughter, Maria Buchinger-Wihelmi, founded two more 'Buchinger Clinics' in Überlingen/Lake Constance and in Marbella/Spain. Continuing Buchinger's work in California, a research team led by Valter D. Longo (Longo and Fontana, 2010: **Online**), is investigating the positive influences of short-term fasting on the fight against cancer cells.

3.4.2 Organisational transformation

Organisational transformation brings about a comprehensive and strategic change in the culture, goals, processes and structure of an organisation. Organisational transformation, as the following example according to the Chamber of Commerce (IHK) Network explains, involves re-evaluating and redesigning various aspects of the organisation to adapt to new challenges, opportunities, or shifts in the external environment.

Example 3.4.2: The Network Chamber — a self-transforming organisation

Wolfgang Epp in 2002 at the age of 43, was one of the youngest managing directors of a Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Germany. Epp was responsible for the 'promotion of the commercial economy' [refer **A-1**, Paragraph 3.5], which represents in terms of the wording in Section 1, Paragraph 2 of the IHK Act of the Federal Ministry (Bundesministerium der Justiz, 2021: **Online**), 'a volatile, uncertain, complex and sometimes contradictory area of responsibility'**.**

Epp has led a 'questioning' life, including time spent in the special research area 'Administration in Change'. He has been involved in many more or less successful organisations in Paris, Augsburg, Brussels (IHK. 2023a: **Online**). During his travels, he heard and experienced the relevancy of professional networks for personal and professional success [refer **A-2,** Paragraph 3.5]. Typically, corporate managers are more often than not very tied up in the day-to-day work of their companies, causing a conflict of priorities.

The IHK members recognise that current industry innovation, practical specialist knowledge and the latest economic topics are critical for survival [refer **B-1**, Paragraph 3.5] in a VUCA world. Epp and his entrepreneurial council are promoters of an equitable arrangement, a practice-oriented network that promotes success in the regional economy with little time and financial investment [refer **B-2**, Paragraph 3.5].

The website of the IHK Reutlingen (IHK, 2023b: **Online**), clearly outlines the concept [refer **C-1**, Paragraph 3.5]: Network groups and topics are created in interactive dialogue with those responsible for the company. If too few participants register for a network consultation, the appointment will not take place, resulting in the company not incurring any appointments or costs.

Currently the chamber of commerce offers a constantly self-transforming network organization [refer **C-2**, Paragraph 3.5] in line with the current

needs of the company's employees. According to Epp (2023: **Meeting**) (IHK General Meeting 2023), over 2,000 participants now take part in network meetings every year, making the IHK Reutlingen, 'the German champion in networking'.

3.4.3 Social transformation

Social transformation brings about changes in institutions, norms, social structures and values that impact society. As seen in the following example drawn from the the Seehaus Concept, social transformation may also involve social justice movements, changes in governance and policies, shifts in cultural attitudes, or additionally, advancements in human rights.

Example 3.4.3: The Seehaus concept for juvenile detention — a social responsibility

It all began with a personal transformation that the young German experienced during a visit to a prison in the USA. The entrepreneur's son Tobias Merckle said: "I felt that something was really drawing me to the prisoners [refer **A-1**, Paragraph 3.5]. It was a feeling of love" (Zehendner, 2021:28)

When Merckle looked more closely into the mechanics of the German prison system, he and his interested friends discovered a number of disconcerting facts [refer **A-2**, Paragraph 3.5], namely:

- That there is a strong subculture in prisons, with a prevalence of gangs, threats, blackmail and abuse.
- The fact that a prison sentence for violent criminals is often not a catastrophe, but rather a rite of passage that increases one's own criminal reputation, as confirmed by social scientist Joachim Kersten (Kersten, 2008:49).
- The youth penal system has the highest recidivism rate (habitual relapse into crime), of all forms of sanctions under the Youth Court Act. After serving a juvenile sentence, 78% of juvenile offenders reoffend

and 45% even return to prison, according to published figures (Jehle, Heinz, & Sutter, 2003: **Online**)

Merckle's findings created social concern among his friends, acquaintances and family, including within the Ministry of Justice, and led to the development of a strategy for juvenile prisons as an alternative to the closed penal system, a concept that does not simply lock offenders away, but rather prepare them for a life without crime. Merckle was only able to convince the Ministry of Justice of his strategy during a second attempt [refer **B-1**, Paragraph 3.5].

Merckle's contract with the Ministry of Justice was enabled as part of the 'Chance Project', allowing him to establish a free-form penal system as part of the juvenile penal system [refer **B-2**, Paragraph 3.5], (Zehendner, 2021,93). Despite numerous examples of further resistance from regional citizens' initiatives, the Seehaus in Leonberg began the social integration of young men in 2003.

The juvenile penal system in a family structured free-form, is a prison without walls and bars. Its particulars include [refer **C-1**, Paragraph 3.5]:

- The concept is based on a positive group culture. Up to seven young men live in a shared apartment with house parents and their children and thus experience, possibly for the first time, family life, love and security.
- It is not the crimes that are in the foreground, but rather the practical acceptance of responsibility in daily routines. Visible reputation arises from compliance with rules as well as from services to the community.
- Integration into society begins directly during the prison sentence, through the professional involvement of numerous volunteers who work for and with the criminals, who are known as 'the youngsters'. A positive group culture also includes making successes visible. Society's trust in the project is rewarded.

The positive effect [refer **C-2**, Paragraph 3.5] is reflected in the apprenticeship and workplace rate of 98% after passing the juvenile penal system (Merckle in Zehendner, 2021:197), as well as the high interest of the public who are regularly invited to the Seehaus Festival (Seehaus, 2014: **Online**).

In keeping with his basic aim of revolutionising the penal system, Merckle has created a successful programme for social transformation in dealing with crime. In addition to helping offenders, there are also programmes for victim support, the enabling of victims and perpetrators to meet in conversation as a contribution to 'restorative justice', preventative self-assertion training for children, support of social work hours for youngsters, leisure groups, and victim empathy training in prisons. A new development has been the establishment of a Seehaus Academy, as a training and further education option for professionals and interested parties, according to personal observations. In this way, a single project has developed a plethora of transformation projects for criminal prevention and social awareness, as opposed to turning away.

3.4.4 Environmental transformation

Environmental transformation addresses environmental challenges and changes with the involvement of human initiatives and efforts for promoting sustainable products and environmentally responsible processes. Environmental transformation could lead to actions to promote renewable energy, reduce carbon emission, conserve natural resources, and enhance environmental stewardship all over the world, as observed according to the following example of the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR).

Example 3.4.4: The Agro-forester — Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR)

Of the land area on the planet, 40% is covered by dryland ecosystems, extremely sensitive to overexploitation. Together with climate change, deforestation, overgrazing and political instability are some of the driving factors causing the desertification of drylands, undermining land productivity and ultimately causing poverty and forced migration (Right Livelihood Organization, 2018: **Online**).

The focus of agro-forester Toni Rinaudo was to plant trees and protect the seedlings, like many other development specialists. Low success rates [refer **A-1**, Paragraph 3.5] with scarcely 10% of seedlings surviving the heat and dust storms, which drove Rinaudo 'close to giving up' (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online)**.

Rinaudo then made a ground-breaking discovery, which is vested in a technique that involves the regeneration of trees from existing root systems. In 'discovering' this underground forest' Rinaudo explains, "…the battle lines were immediately redrawn" [refer **A-2**, Paragraph 3.5] (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**). "Reforestation was no longer a question of having the right technology or enough budget, staff or time. It was not even about fighting the Sahara Desert, or goats or drought. The battle was now about challenging deeply held beliefs, attitudes and practices and convincing people that it would be in their best interest to allow at least some of these 'bushes' to become trees again" (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**).

Rinaudo furthermore realised, "…that if people were the ones who had reduced the forest to a barren landscape, it would require people to restore it—and false beliefs, attitudes and practices would need to be challenged with truth, love and perseverance" (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**). Many government stakeholders and members of climate, development and agricultural communities still have the idea [refer **B-1**, Paragraph 3.5], that arable land and trees are mutually exclusive, and that globally, the practice

of agro-forestry is of little importance. Even for regional farmers, trees only get in the way when ploughing the fields. Some therefore do not see the diverse and lasting benefits they can have (Rinaudo, 2022:259). Rinaudo's approach [refer **B-2**, Paragraph 3.5], mooted,"…a farmer-led movement across continents, regreening the lands, improving the livelihoods of millions and helping to combat climate change" (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**).

For this purpose, Rinaudo involved everyone who could benefit from the renaturation project, namely people with leading positions in the government, traditional and spiritual authorities, young people, women, and also marginalised groups. "First, we raise awareness of the connection between deforestation and impoverishment" (Rinaudo, 2022:245) [Free translation from the German by the author of this thesis]. To promote solidarity and mutual support, the formation of FMNR groups were encouraged. In most cases, it was also necessary for laws to be changed so that farmers have the necessary security to benefit from FMNR themselves. Changing attitudes has been key to Rinaudo's successful work.

"Only then does the practical training begin [refer **C-1**, Paragraph 3.5]. By choosing the right plants and pruning and protecting them in a certain way, farmers can grow their own trees. We accompany the farmers for a while, we visit them at certain intervals, we learn together, coach, correct, encourage and support them, especially there, where the risk of setbacks is particularly high. This takes much time, requires patience, and above all, requires empathy. It is about much more than specialist knowledge and skills. We look for market connections to generate economic sustainability and we also facilitate value creation e.g. through the introduction of bees and fruit sales" (Rinaudo, 2022:245). [Free translation from the German by the author of this thesis]. As a result, Rinaudo's FMNR method has restored over 200 million trees on 50,000 km2 of land within Niger (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**).

The method has the potential to restore drylands in an area the size of India. Due to its simplicity, local adaptability and low cost, as well as easy

combination with other agricultural methods and quick results, FMNR is now an enormous success. Through peer-to-peer learning among farmers, the method has spread with little need for outside intervention [refer **C-2**, Paragraph 3.5]. Meanwhile, at least 25 countries are now using the method, mainly in Africa (Right Livelihood, 2018: **Online**).

3.4.5 Technical transformation

Technological transformation involves leveraging technology to fundamentally change the way in which it operates. This next level can include how and which products to produce, how and which values are delivered to customers, and how interaction with business-partners, employees and stakeholders take place. Technological transformation includes adopting digital tools, technologies, and processes to streamline operations, enhance customer and employee experiences, and drive disruption as well as innovation, as demonstrated by the following real-world example.

Example 3.4.5: The XELLAR Production System: Lean, green and digital

In 2017 when Industry 4.0 became a catch phrase, new technological possibilities and avenues were exponentially changing the technology landscape with new products, services and processes emerging as older ones disappeared [refer **A-1**, Paragraph 3.5]. Manfred Roth is a mechanical engineer and 'production engineer', who pondered on production systems of the future (Pflock-Rutten, 2021: **Online**), and how in essence, 'the machine conception of the future be designed? Concurrently, his engineering team has been building unique production machines based on customer requests involving a production system up to 60 metres long for each product. These involved reliable production machines, including all the process steps required for the production of sheet metal elements involving punching, forming, perforating, and welding.

Roth in pursuing the possibilities availed by production machines, consulted with team members and external partners and embarked upon an assessment [refer **A-2**, Paragraph 3.5], of his company's digital strategy (Eberspächer-Roth, 2019:152-155). The findings returned the following [refer **B-1**, Paragraph 3.5]:

- The specially constructed machines are expensive, both in design and manufacture as well as maintenance.
- The machines do not easily integrate into a digital environment.
- They are difficult to operate and require human expert knowledge.
- They generally do not enable a holistic energy saving concept.
- Industrial customers are not offered sustainable investment security in a changing market environment.

The answer to Roth's question regarding the machine of the future was based on the above assessment findings, which returned that a modular, digital, ergonomic and energy-efficient production system is needed for innovative industrial customers, the proverbial "Lean, Green and Digital" [refer **B-2**, Paragraph 3.5]. The assessment furthermore prompted action, whereby quality requirements were coordinated internally and externally with regard to feasibility, including the future Lean design. Budget plans were drawn, while resources and target dates were coordinated [refer **C-1**, Paragraph 3.5].

Soon thereafter, the first system under the futuristic name XELLAR was launched at a customer's premises, ready for production and proudly celebrated (Pflock-Rutten, 2021: **Online**). Since then, an entire modular system has been developed, several patents have been created and registered, and numerous innovation prizes have been awarded both for the XELLAR production system and to the development team [refer **C-2**, Paragraph 3.5].

3.5 ANALYSING THE EXAMPLES FOR STRUCTURED TRANSFORMATION

In answering the question: "What structured transformation process can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics?", all examples cited and outlined in the previous paragraph (Paragraph 3.4), returned a specific structure for transformation.

Three main areas for a purposeful structured transformation process were identified, namely:

- **A - Information:** Leadership sensitivity and dialogue for understanding the basic situation [**A-1**], and background knowledge [**A-2**] for the situation.
- **B - Decision:** Leadership discussion and persuasion for deciding the real problem [**B-1**], and adequate vision [**B-2**] in meeting the demands of the VUCA world phenomenon.
- **C - Change:** Leadership support of action management [**C-1**], and reflection of the results [**C-2**] for successfully reaching the transformed state.

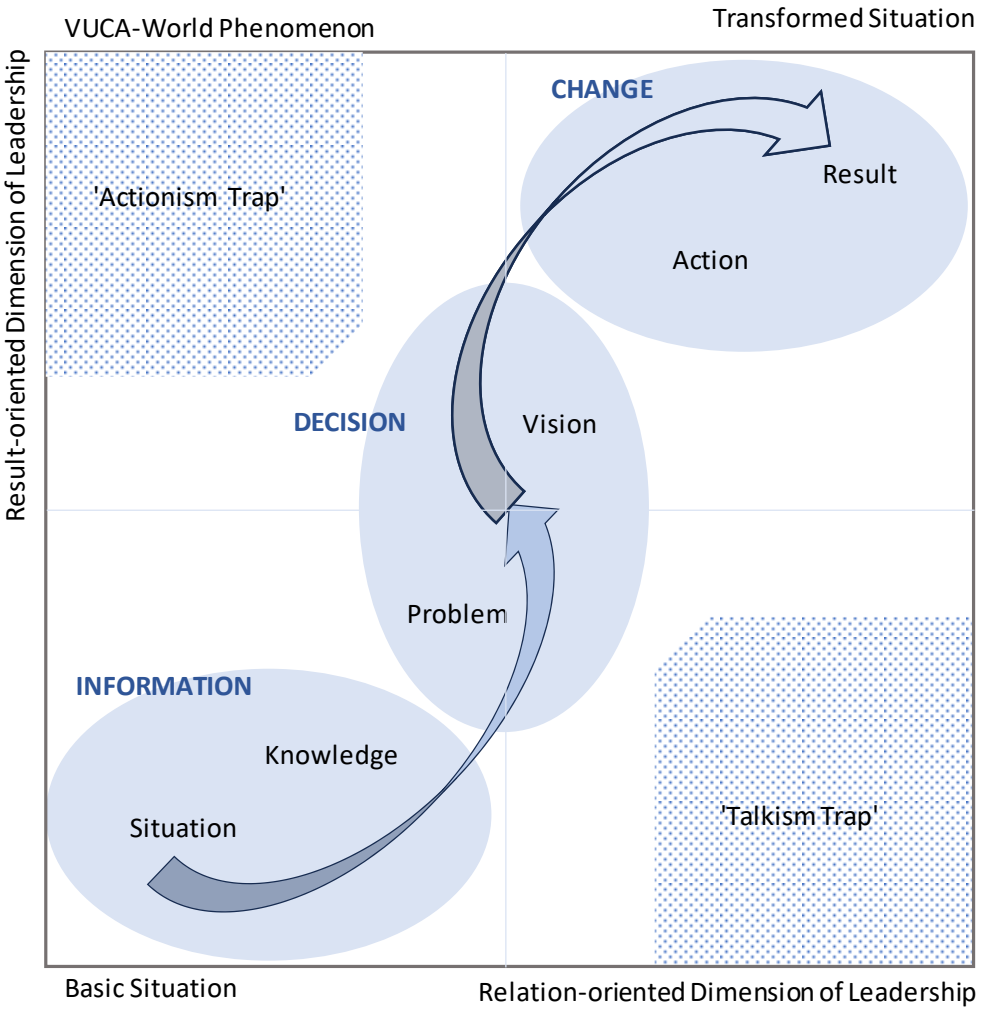
An overview of the analysis of the results and structure is tabulated in Table 3.2 for ease of reference of the reader.

Table 3.2: Overview transformation structure in terms of the analysis results of the transformation examples (**Source:** Own source).

Transformation Structure	Process Elements	Leadership Elements
A – INFORMATION	1 Situation	Sensitiveness
	2 Knowledge	Dialog
B – DECISION	3 Problem	Discourse
	4 Vision	Persuasion
C - CHANGE	5 Action	Management
	6 Result	Reflection

3.6 STRUCTURED TRANSFORMATION AND LEADERSHIP

As is evident from Paragraph 3.5 and the analysed structure presented, relatively more relation-oriented leadership and sensitiveness is required at the beginning of a transformation before targeted actions can be realised. This relationship work also includes the relationship with oneself. The focus then migrates to dialog for gaining knowledge and discourse as well as persuasion for the true will for change actions, the drama centre or the so-called 'catharsis'. Only after this preparatory work is concluded and effective decisions are made can the implementation of efficient actions (change management) begin. Equally important to the examples analysed, is the victory, the new culture, and above all, reflecting and celebrating the results of the transformed dispensation.



Design 3.1: Structured Transformation S-Curve and leadership within the VUCA world phenomenon (**Source**: Own source).

The structured transformation S-Curve graphically depicted in Design 3.1, by implication supports a mental framework for the conscious guidance of an efficient and effective process of transformation for personal, social, environmental, organisation or technical purposes. The result is a continuous flowing systemic approach to transformation, focused on understanding and effective and efficient continuous learning, adapting and evolving to meet the needs within a VUCA world as an ongoing process, allowing leaders and participants at each stage to inform and influence each other.

3.7 CONCLUSION: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT STRUCTURED TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Chapter 3 answers the question: “What structured transformation process can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics?”

For clarity of purpose, data collected in the formulation of the answer to the above stated research question, were drawn from ‘explicit knowledge’ using authoritative literature (Tiwana, 2001:40; Turban, McLean and Wetherby, 2002:389; and Lucas 2000:33), and gleaned from this author’s own ‘tacit knowledge’ (Tiwana, 2001:39; and Turban, McLean and Wetherby, 2002:389). The latter included knowledge of transformational success and failures, as well as the aspects stimulating transformative activity, through the utilisation of examples from the following areas, namely personal, organisational, social-, environmental- and technological transformation.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 4

This chapter answers the question: “What purposeful structured communication concept could be followed for leading transformation to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon?” By implication this chapter would then also meet the requirements set for the associated secondary research objective.

In answering this question, the nature of humans and leadership is explained, the status quo of change fitness is presented, and the transformation process is further developed upon to include a leadership communication concept, which maps to the structured transformation process indicated within Chapter 3, with the following questions and elements of leadership communication:

- What is the situation?
- What is the background?
- What is the problem?
- What is the vision?
- What is the change-action?
- What is the result?

The proposed chapter and its demarcated parts in context of the overall research, is graphically depicted in Figure 4.1. below.

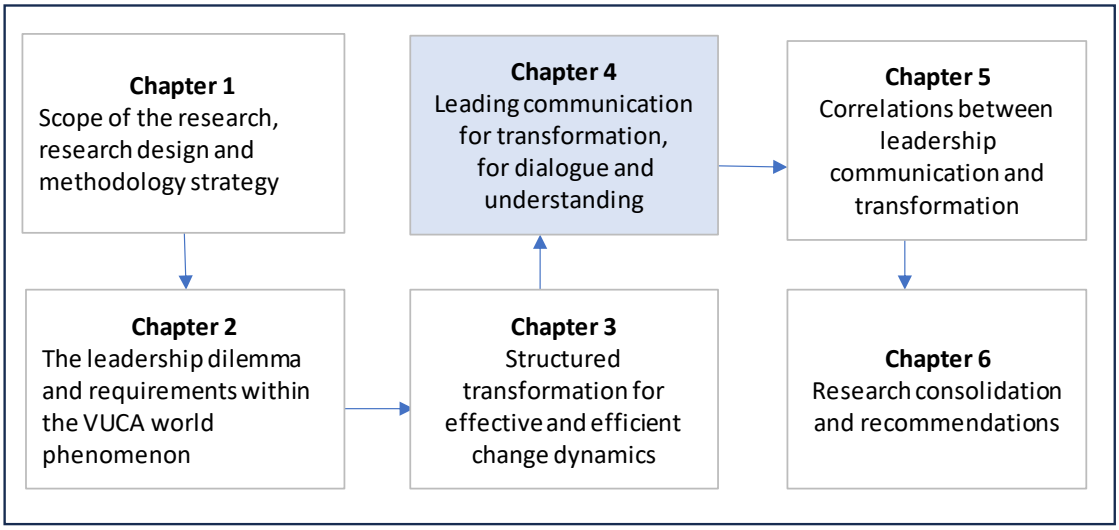

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 4.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This chapter will address (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- Nature of humans and leadership.
- The status quo of change fitness.
- Communication for transformation.
- Leading communication for transformation.

CHAPTER 4:
LEADING COMMUNICATION FOR TRANSFORMATION, FOR DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

How does a lion look like? This seemingly simple question would have immediately changed the dangerous situation with the assumed lioness in Berlin (see Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.4.2), efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, this leaves an open question as to how much more relevant it is for a manager, to have the critical questions of transformation in mind when making decisions?

Questions, forming the purposeful structure of communication for transformation, have been formulated in the knowledge that major or radical chance does not happen easily. The questions, which would aid to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon for an efficient and effective transformation are drawn from the five success examples elaborated upon in Chapter 3, within their specific areas of transformation.

To ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon leading to effective and efficient change dynamics, communication for transformation must not only be designed to address the barriers of misunderstanding, but also have to overcome them. The author of this thesis is aware that every defined process, as well as every design, tend to simplify reality, so that in application and depending on the circumstances, differing dynamics may develop. Notwithstanding, the following insights based on questions and images serve as orientation in the VUCA world phenomenon for professionalism and humanity in the change process.

4.2 NATURE OF HUMANS AND LEADERSHIP

The concept of 'leadership communication' is based on a humanistic view, in which people are ready to perform, strive to lead a self-determined life, are eager to develop further, and as social beings, seek proximity to others. McGregor's (1960) leadership approach can be used to illustrate this view of humanity. In his X and Y theory, McGregor (1960:33-58), describes two different images that managers can have of their team members. Managers who are followers of Theory X, view people as inherently lazy and complacent, who work as little as possible, and have to be told what to do. From this perspective, employees can only be motivated extrinsically, through external rewards. What is particularly relevant to Theory X is the fact that people are resistant to change and their behaviour is subject to external (management) control.

In contrast, proponents of Theory Y assume that people are willing to achieve, and wish to achieve meaningful goals. Furthermore, strive to realise themselves, by getting involved and taking responsibility. This theory is therefore intrinsic, i.e. motivated from within. People view work as a source of satisfaction, and are therefore open to change.

McGregor has undoubtedly drawn scholarly attention to the human images of leaders. Some modern leadership approaches are shaped by his distinctions. A modern perspective that reflects McGregor's theory is the distinction between 'transactional leadership' and 'transformational leadership' (Bass & Bass, 2008: **Part V, No. 22**).

- **Transactional leadership:** This is the targeted influence of people within organisations via transparent and rational exchange processes. There is therefore a factual exchange relationship (hence the term 'transactional leadership'), that assumes a rational employee is committed purely for financial reasons. More specifically, it is an exchange of money for performance. It is easy to see Theory X operating in the background in the companies and managers who operate within.

- **Transformational leadership:** In terms of this concept, people within organisations are targeted through a profound change to create enthusiastic followers. Companies and managers who operate within rely on role model behaviour, charismatic leadership, ambitious and emotional visions, the ideologization of employees, and a fundamental change in the thinking of the people being led. More specifically, it constitutes a 'transformation'. Against the background of this approach, one can easily recognise Theory Y as 'an image of humanity'.

There are examples of very successful leaders operating within the context of both Theory X and Theory Y. Somewhat superficially, one may be tempted to condemn practitioners of Theory X as having a traditional or even misanthropic understanding of leadership, while assuming practitioners of Theory Y have a more people-friendly leadership culture. In fact, leaders operating under the auspices of Theory Y can also be quite manipulative and harmful.

From this author's own leadership experience, all too often leaders treat others according to their own personal 'user manual'. Such a dispensation can be successful provided the work environment is not adversely impacted upon by any of the VUCA dispensations. When however, in the instance the work environment is subject to any of the VUCA dispensations, such a 'user manual' becomes quickly ineffective and serve only as a curtailment to efficient and effective decision-making.

Leadership means dealing with both Theory X and Theory Y situations. In principle, people cannot be classified according to X or Y theories, rather, their behaviour varies depending on the prevailing combination of 'leadership' and 'situation'. Every leadership situation is different, and it is governed by the individual, the situation, and the leadership. True leadership is 'like a healing power' (Schulz von Thun, 2022b:170), which encourages the partners to explore and contribute to their inner selves. This is especially important when different needs, interests or even 'old wounds' are opened, resulting in well-known phenomena such as polarisation,

escalation, and punctuation. In light of a VUCA situation dynamic, the human encounter in connection with the systemic situation view, establishes humanism as the basis for constructive transformation. The 'magic' of communication for transformation lies therefore in the ability to connect human minds in a unique way.

4.3 THE STATUS QUO OF CHANGE FITNESS

In 2018, only 23% of a total of 368 entrepreneurs, managers and employees surveyed rated the change initiatives implemented in their organisation as successful (Sackmann, Eichel & Schmidt, 2018: **Online**). The degree of achievement of the goals associated with the transformation was used as a criterion for the evaluation, and considered successful when 75% of the set goals were achieved. In the survey, questions about investment in change were also posed, with participants reporting that at least 28% of an annual total project budget had been invested in accompanying change management activities such as qualifications, communication and behaviour change.

According to the above study, the biggest challenge seems to be that managers act with too little focus on personal aspects resulting in little appreciative interaction in change being evident. This can also be attributed to the lack or inadequate involvement of middle management and the driver of change. There are still areas of development in communication that should become more open, honest and dialogue oriented. From the perspective of those surveyed in the above study, the most important parameters that determine a successful transformation are 'communication', 'communication', and yet more 'communication'. Following this comes leadership, clarity of goals, and involvement of the team in the change process.

Underpinned by the above findings and in the opinion of this author, the success factors of transformation can be summarised with the following

formula, which reads: **Leading Communication x Structured Process = Transformation Success.**

4.4 COMMUNICATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

Leading communication for transformation will now be analysed further and developed in terms of the following structured process questions:

- What is the situation?
- What is the background?
- What is the problem?
- What is the vision?
- What is the change action?
- What is the result?

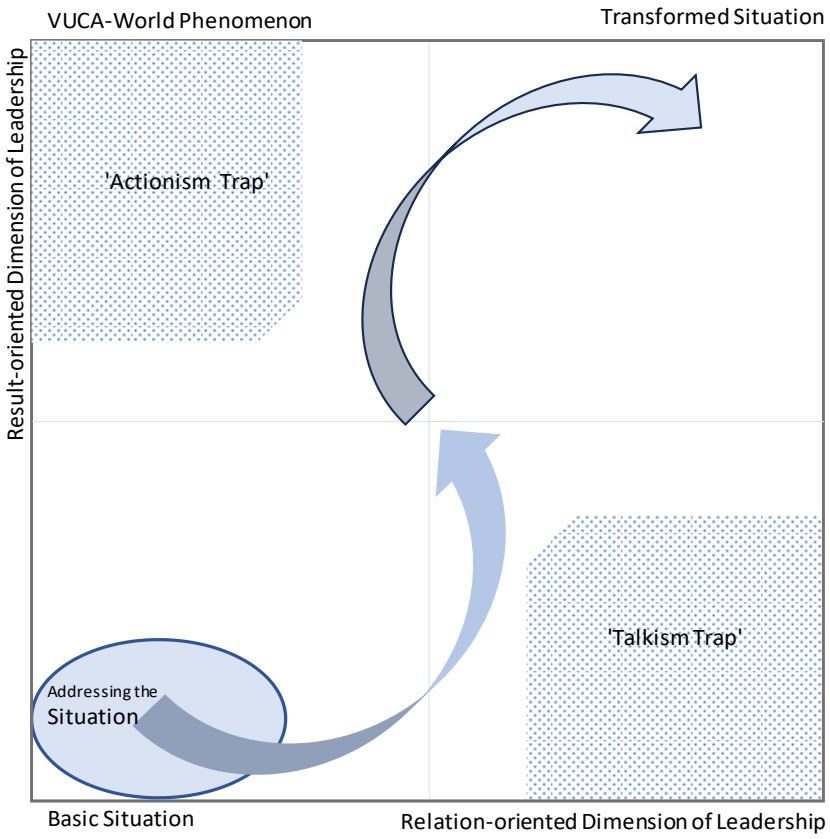
Successful transformation of any magnitude will pass through all six stages, usually in the sequence listed above. That does not mean all questions have the same requirements of intensity. Rather, these questions can be viewed as communication guidelines in the width of the VUCA world, symbolising the leadership overview needed for dialogue and understanding, despite the fact that they may be applied flexible in magnitude and intensity.

However, skipping or neglecting one single question leads, based on the experience of this author, to a dramatic reduction in the chance to success. Every component is connected with at least three elements, as is evident in the following chapters of this thesis. In conclusion, the last question, which focuses on a reflection of the results, in this author's personal leadership experiences, is unequivocally one of the 'secrets' of sustainable transformation success.

4.4.1 What is the situation? (Addressing)

It is like a spotlight on a situation: Addressing the issue is the first step in starting a transformation journey. It sounds easy, but requires real bravery, depending on whether those involved in the process are open to positive resonance or not. The following design graphically depicted below as

Design 4.1, provides for an overview of this first stage of the communication process within the VUCA world phenomenon.



Design 4.1: Communication for transformation: Addressing the situation (**Source:** Own source).

Four aspects pertaining to one message

Addressing a situation can be complex, due to the fact that one single message may contain a variety of information elements. Schulz von Thun (2008:12), inspired by Buehler (1934) and Watzlawick *et al*. (1969), developed a psychological model of interpersonal communication: The four sides (aspects) of a message are as follows:

- **Objective content:** Information about facts.
- **Self-Disclosure:** Information about the transmitter of the message.
- **Relationship:** The transmitter's position towards the receiver, often through non-verbal accompanying signals.
- **Appeal:** The more or less intended impact on the receiver.

In this instance, the 'transmitter' is communicating four aspects of information simultaneously. This multitude of data defines the psychological

quality of a message, the meaning of which contains the entire multi-sided package with both verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication. The complexity of dialogue is vested in the fact that the receiver is generally free to choose whichever aspect of the message he or she wish to react to.

Dialogue

The approach for a dialogue begins with sensitivity, i.e. by describing the implicit and unseen sides of the situation or the other person in clear, sensitive words, and thus making them accessible for dialogue (and transformation), '*sine ira et studio'*, which translates into 'without anger and passion'. Therefore, it can be helpful to articulate what should and should not be topics for a conversation, and to not look for someone to blame or other similar easily-assumed intentions.

The religious-philosophical term '*Kairos*' describes the propitious or favourable time for a decision or action, the unused passing of which could be disadvantageous. Accordingly, leadership sensitivity for dialogue also means being able to wait for the right time. One dialogue 'magic tool' for building a common understanding could be to address an issue questioningly or 'tentatively', in the sense of a respectful confrontation.

Examples drawn from Chapter 3:

- Tobias Merckle, for the Seehaus concept, waited for '*Kairos'* to occur (refer to Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3), which emerged in the form of a political dinner during, which he was able to speak personally to the minister of justice in a respectful dialogue.
- "I have the impression that the technology now ('*Kairos*') enables networked machine concepts", is how Manfred Roth from XELLAR began his transformation journey (refer to Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5). There is neither anger nor condemnation in this simple statement, but rather a question.

The focus is therefore on seeking understanding rather than condemning a situation, in whatever form it manifests. The aim of the address is to gain

understanding from different perspectives until a mutual definition of the situation is found, which leads to a positive response from both conversation partners: “Yes, we see the situation as it is”.

Hypothesis theory of perception

“What is the situation?” The (limited) view of a situation and thus the approach depends on one’s own, usually limited, perception. Essential for the acuteness of these human perceptions are previous social factors, according to the ‘hypothesis theory of perception’ (Bruner and Postman, 1951:72-118), such as previous experiences, cognitive sets and moods, but also possible prejudices that have a direct influence on the perception and assessment of facts and people. These factors usually act like a filter in the absorption of information and make neutral perception more difficult. Since these personal assumptions, the hypothesis, control attention in addition to what is perceived, interpretation is also influenced, i.e. one's own resonance or that of the listeners. In addition to selective perception (selection) and initial decision-making processes (inference processes), important foundations are laid for later decisions and actions (Bruner & Postman, 1951:72-118).

This first perception is often only a weak symptom and is mostly just the proverbial ‘tip of the iceberg’, in the experience of this author. For example, in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.4, the agro-forester Tony Rinaudo (2022:14), believes: “Today I am convinced that it is impossible to achieve a cost-effective or good result if your own assumptions are wrong. Then you are blind to the solution, even if it is literally at your feet” [free translation from the original German text by the author of this research study].

Truthful person

There is a growing realisation that when addressing a critical topic, what is first and foremost relevant is inner harmony within oneself. This comes from the tangible responsibility or advocacy for a topic: “Who am I and what do I have to do with the topic?” Accepting who I am, both as a manager and my

counterpart, is paradoxically the first step towards changing situations that are perceived as problematic, as is evident from the examples in Chapter 3:

- Buchinger realised how little the excess in the officers' mess meant to him and how vitalising a different lifestyle could be for him personally (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1).
- Merckle, whose parents would have liked to integrate him into company management, recognised his calling to help prisoners and marginalised people during a prison visit as a young adult (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3.

Communicating self-sensitivity does not mean an exaggerated self-disclosure, nor does it mean a representation of ignorance in the sense of being naive or stupid. Nor is it about self-awareness, as this can be understood in an exaggerated sense. The truth of appropriate congruency of one's own personality serves as an inner compass for appropriate communication. Rogers (2015:67), lists empathy (non-judgmental, empathetic understanding), acceptance (unconditional appreciation) and congruence (genuineness) as the core variables of person-centred conversation. Through this acceptance of oneself and of the other person, the communicative elements that were previously necessary to deal with non-ideal existence are no longer hidden from yourself and others.

Paradox of change

A paradox of change occurs when acceptance meets a deep willingness for understanding. The more a mind-set is developed to accept the other person, the sooner an issue can be freed-up and resolved. The following three questions are in the opinion of this author, helpful for leaders to consider before communicating major change:

- “How do I react at a given moment, according to my personality?” (Relation-oriented approach).
- “What approach is suitable to the situation according to my responsibility?” (Result-oriented approach).

- “How can I develop myself or the situation to combine both aspects for addressing the situation for the better?” (Transformation-oriented approach).

Without this combined coherence from the third question, every choice of words, no matter how well chosen, turns into a manipulative façade (in extreme cases). Without an appropriate choice of words however, such personal coherence quickly turns into inappropriate and rude frankness. Ultimately, communicating situations is about combining humanity and professionalism to achieve appropriate agreement. Every VUCA situation is unique, so every approach must also be different. Launching a pre-scripted speech will have little impact and will not touch hearts. Pure linguistic eloquence and corresponding rhetoric seems embarrassing without the personal element of one's own soul. Whether in politics, business or society, conversation partners wish to speak to a 'real person’ and not to a façade, no matter how well trained.

Conclusion: Addressing the situation

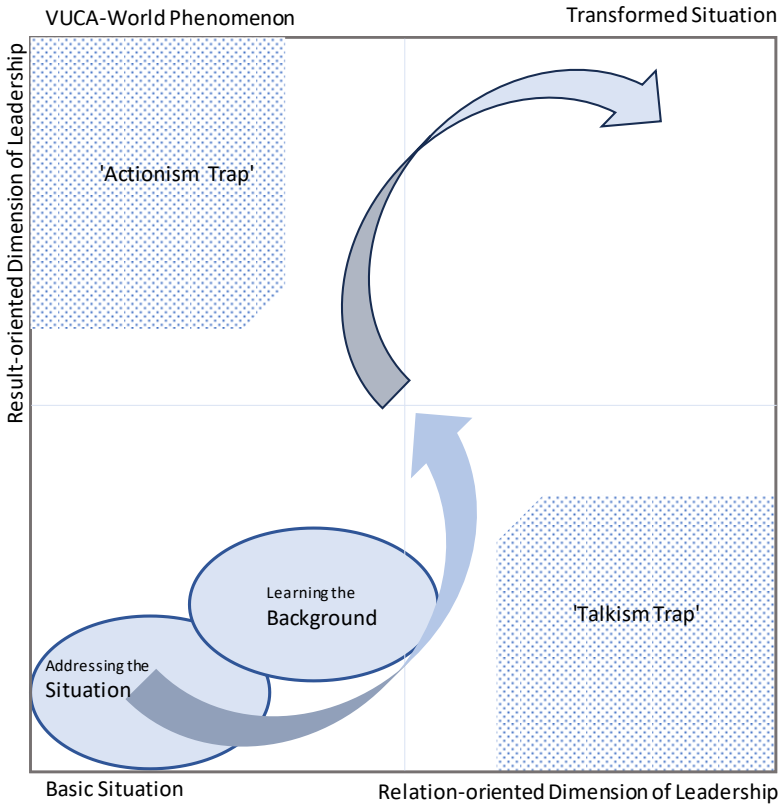
Using leadership as an initiator for transformation, requires sensitivity in order to recognise the unique nature of a situation. Addressing this means describing a perception rather than evaluating it, and enabling resonance and cooperation. By addressing the topic, a leader visibly takes responsibility and control in order to create a beginning for change. A mutual definition of the situation is the element for understanding: “Yes, we see the situation as it is”. Tabulated in Table 4.1 are the key elements of leading communication for transformation.

Table 4.1: Leading communication for transformation: Addressing the situation. (**Source**: Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialog	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
1 Situation	What is the situation?	Addressing the situation	Resonance	Yes, we see- the situation as it is	Sensitiveness

4.4.2 What is the background? (Learning)

It is certainly an act of humility as a leader to recognise one's own limitations and to ask oneself and those around you: "What is the background here? What led to this situation, what decisions, words, behaviour, actions, even mistakes took place in the past?"



Design 4.2: Communication for transformation: Learning the background (**Source:** Own source).

Design 4.2 above graphically depicts an overview of the second status of the communication process within the VUCA world phenomenon.

Traditionally, managers built their power potential on omniscience, the ability to know everything. In a digitalised VUCA world, a new awareness is emerging among managers that this is no longer possible, and also no longer makes sense. Information moves too quickly, and the worlds of work and society are too differentiated. Knowledge has become individual. Analogous to the human brain, 'thinking' is not reserved for a hierarchically higher control centre. It is instead the task of all interconnected team members (Eberspächer-Roth & Stegert, 2021:6).

Cognitive reaction

Even when neuroscientist Professor Sophie Scott states that, "…almost all perception is based on the detection of change" (Storr, 2019:11) [free translation from German to English by this author], people find it difficult to change their own views or habits. This is based on the cognitive reaction model, which states that attitude changes predominantly and do not occur on the basis of communicated arguments, but rather only with the thoughts (cognitive reaction) that arise when the recipient deals with the arguments (Greenwald, 1968:147-170).

The hypothesis theory of perception shows appropriate measures that lead to an expansion of one's own perception so that more inner openness can arise. According to Abele (2006:396-403), these include:

- More information.
- Alternative explanations.
- Time for reflection.

Information, explanation, and time, are the relevant measures of action in order to achieve openness through appropriate communication, and to gradually grasp the current truth and background of a situation. As Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator on Great Britain's exit from the EU said, "…no emotions, no passion, no polemics", and further in an interview with WirtschaftsWoche (Wettach, 2023:90-91), "…and those who have respect, listen and do not try to impose their point of view on other people" [free translation from German to English by this author].

Lifelong learning

"Lifelong learning is the leadership mindset of transformation in the 21st century" (Kotter, 2012:191). The cited author furthermore describes the cause of this mind-set as 'mental habits' with the following characteristics:

- **Humble self-reflection:** Honest assessment of successes and failures, especially the latter.
- **Solicitation of opinions:** Aggressive collection of information and ideas from others.
- **Careful listening:** Propensity to listen to others.
- **Openness to new ideas:** Willingness to view life with an open mind.
- **Risk taking:** Willingness to push oneself outside comfort zones.

Leaders who are lifelong learners do not have the attitude that they know everything or that other people have little to contribute. Exactly the opposite is the case, in that these leaders believe they can learn something from everyone, through every situation and under almost any circumstances. Learning as a pattern of personal growth and transformation is increasingly being rewarded in a rapidly changing VUCA world, as can be seen in the following examples previously elaborated upon in Chapter 3:

- Buchinger deals with questions of a healthy lifestyle and fasting (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1).
- Epp from the Chamber of Commerce Reutlingen discusses the potential impact of professional networks with entrepreneurs (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.2).
- Merckle, prior to setting up the Seehaus project, informs himself about the penal system, talks to experts and authorities, and recognises the opportunities to revolutionise the boys' penal system (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3).
- Rinaudo, the agro-forester, discovers that existing underground roots of cleared trees can be used efficiently to sprout again with appropriate care (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.4).
- Roth from XELLAR, takes part in an entrepreneur assessment for digital strategy and recognises the market-changes of networking machines (refer Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

These examples of gained knowledge have allowed each leader to learn from the past, including and above all from mistakes, in order to competently change the future. A positive 'error culture' understands mistakes as a source of knowledge gain and as a foundation for new factors for solving problems (i.e. lessons learned).

Knowledge

In order to gain knowledge about facts, history, circumstances, the relevant decision-makers and much more, leaders must ask questions. This may involve gathering data and conducting research while engaging in dialogue with participants. It is essential to gain input that represents the history and reasons that led up to the situation. Understanding the past and thinking through the background of what led to the actual dispensation is critical for creating a transformed future. The basic method for obtaining information is questioning. Following Rauen (2014:81), different types of questions are listed here, with reciprocal assessment thereof gleaned from the hands-on experience of this researcher:

- **Open (naive) questions:** Who, what, where, when, how and why? These questions are the strongest for gathering new information and open-minded knowledge. Disadvantage: The other person may feel interrogated or 'out questioned'.
- **Self-Attention Enhancing Questions**: i.e., questions with direct relevance, for example, how do you perceive the situation? These questions signal high appreciation and expert knowledge.
- **Self-Attention Disrupting Questions:** Do you want to hear what others have said about the situation? Helpful for giving new perspectives within a dialogue.
- **Hypothetical questions:** What would you do if…? These are especially useful in reframing-dialogues, to expand thinking horizons.
- **Alternative questions:** Would you be more in favour of this or that alternative? Giving two options is helpful for faster solutions.
- **Circular questions:** How did the customer come to make this statement? This line of questioning is helpful for saving the counterpart's face.

- **Indirect questions:** May I…? This asks for permission and is important to use when it comes to very personal topics.
- **Direct closed questions:** Is the contract signed? These are not suitable for opening a dialogue, but are adequate and important for quickly clarifying numbers, dates and facts.

The use of a 'mixture' from the above questions are recommended during a relation and result-oriented dialogue for transformation.

Plurality

As previously stated in Paragraph 4.2, all too often leaders treat others according to their own personal 'user manual'. Such a dispensation can be successful provided the work environment is not adversely impacted upon by any of the VUCA dispensations. When however, in the instance the work environment is subject to any of the VUCA dispensations, such a 'user manual' becomes quickly ineffective and serve only as a curtailment to efficient and effective decision-making.

Plurality can be dismissed as annoying and time-consuming, or understood as a treasure that can contribute to a good transformation. Allowing different perspectives to be aired makes change actions more appropriate and balanced. This also applies to managers themselves: Just as a team can represent different opinions, managers also experience an inner plurality, especially in VUCA situations. This is normal and even helpful for making good decisions (Schulz von Thun, 2008:4), who states that there are different, "…egos within me who live together as well as struggle against each other for validity".

Stakeholder coalition

In a VUCA world in which individuals no longer have all the information for extraordinary decisions, it is teams with a good composition and the necessary trust that contribute to high efficiency and effectiveness of change. A team that efficiently integrates a wide range of stakeholders can compile information and develop know-how more quickly. In addition, these people have the potential for the later introduction of new approaches, as

they know the background and are involved in key decisions, as shown in the cited transformation examples (refer Chapter 3), by Epp, Rinaudo, Merckle, Roth and Buchinger, the latter who also has his personal team, consisting of his innermost thoughts, as well as family, friends and medical colleagues.

For a stakeholder team, the following characteristics deem to be essential, according to the observed examples as outlined in Chapter 3 and supported by this author drawn from hand-on industry experience, namely:

- **Credibility and trust:** A mutual understanding regarding trust, responsibility and straightforwardness, as well as a good reputation and position.
- **Competence:** Various experiences and competencies are relevant to the topic of transformation in a broader way. This includes a wide scope from technical and leadership expertise to personal competence based on concern for the topic.
- **Commitment:** The willingness to think about the topic, to support decisions, and to contribute to positive cooperation.

Conclusion: Learning from the background

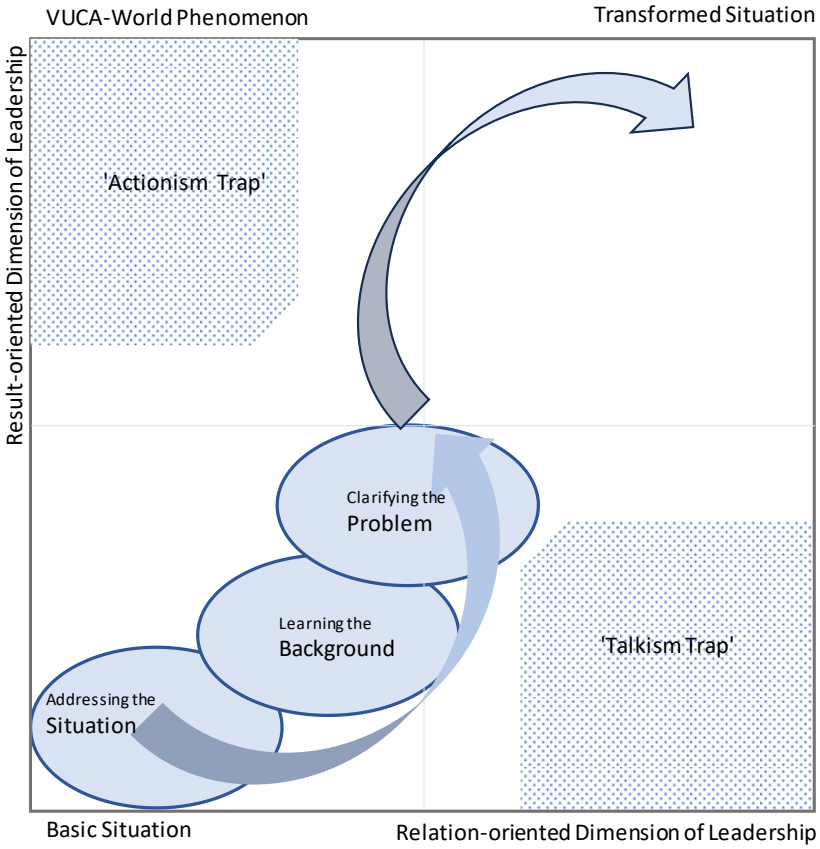
The knowledge gained from questioning becomes the transformation prerequisite for acting powerfully and effectively in full understanding of the situation, even staying friendly in a hostile VUCA surrounding. The better the leader is aligned with their inner or outer team, the higher the probability that change actions are effective and efficient for the success of transformation. Leadership dialogue for understanding and knowledge about the background of the situation are key for this alignment. The tabulation contained within the ambit of Table 4.2 shows the key elements of leading communication for transformation: Learning from the background.

Table 4.2: Leading communication for transformation: Learning from the background (**Source:** Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialogue	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
2 Back-ground	What is the background?	Questioning for back-ground knowledge	Learning	Yes, we learn from past actions	Dialogue

4.4.3 What is the problem? (Clarifying)

What is the problem? Is it the lioness in Berlin, as seen in the example of a viral video on social media that led to a major police operation (see Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.4.2), featuring the question if the lioness is a wild boar, or perhaps just an imaginary lioness, triggered by activism? Design 4.3 graphically depicts the importance of this third status of the communication process within the VUCA world phenomenon.



Design 4.3: Communication for transformation: Clarifying the problem (**Source:** Own source).

“What is the problem?” This is the central question in the transformation process, the key to a further efficient and effective process after considerable knowledge about the situation has been gathered. Without understanding the true and clear problem, there is no transformation success and no heroes. Just frustrated police officers, in terms of the Actionism-Trap expanded upon in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.4.2.

Before people get involved in a supposedly good cause and much time and money are invested, the central question at the heart of a purposefully structured transformation is: “What is the real problem?” Two-way discussions and discourse are essential to clarifying the problem for a transformation process. Wrestling with a problem means asking questions, challenging and arguing. Clear, simple, memorable, repeated and consistent communication is the foundation for finding true problem clarity. Achieving a common understanding of the problem from many voices is further essential for successful transformation.

Attitude changes and protection motivation

According to the theory of protection motivation, the successful change of insights contains the following aspects, as outlined in the summary by Moser (2015:62-63):

- Consequences and personal impact, e.g. Buchinger (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1).
- Intrinsic or extrinsic reinforcers for previous behaviour versus intrinsic or extrinsic reinforcers for new behaviour. In business terms, ‘behavioural costs’, from previous to new behaviour, e.g. XELLAR (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5) This consideration of behavioural costs is described by Moser (2014:63), as the most important impact factor.
- Possibility of personal effective counter-measures, such as self-transforming IHK networks (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.2).
- Benefits of the changed behaviour for the person and/or the environment, e.g. demand for XELLAR production systems (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

When evidence of a large problem surface, communicated arguments will more often than not, be ignored. Life is usually more pleasurable without problems and incumbents already have enough challenges to think about. Leading purposeful communication by implication implies that baseless 'happy talk' are curtailed/stopped, and replaced by rewarding honest discussions with people willing to confront the problem.

Creating a strong sense of urgency usually demands bold or even risky actions that are associated with good leadership. In order for people to change their views and habits, a mental hurdle is required, as was evident from the cited example in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3:

- For more than 13 years, Merckle has been working to raise awareness in society about the situation in the juvenile justice system, among family, friends, authorities, and in the Ministry of Justice. This was against a background that shows that the juvenile justice system in Germany in particular has the highest recidivism rate of all forms of sanctions under the Youth Court Act. At the same time, the dispensation was exasperated by the fact that there is a shortage of youth specialists (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3).

The worth of crises

Crises are invaluable sources of new attitudes and can be appreciated as important indicators of the right moment of change for the better, as the following examples from Chapter 3 depicts:

- IHK members recognise that current industry innovation, practical specialist knowledge, and the latest economic topics are critical for survival in a VUCA world, as shown in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.2.
- Rinaudo (2022:260), developed an understanding that many government officials and members of climate, development and agricultural communities have the idea that arable land and trees are mutually exclusive, and that globally, the practice of agro-forestry is of low importance. Even for regional farmers, trees only get in the way when ploughing fields, and prevent quick yields, as previously expanded upon in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.4.

- For Roth and his team, it is the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of traditional production systems that lacked flexibly and that could not be adapted to faster product life cycles (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

Communication in crisis situations is best supported by a climate of appreciation and inspiration, in which quiet and loud, introverted and extroverted speakers listen directly to each other. Discussing differences constructively and using them dialectically, also serves to get to the core of the problem, even if it may initially be difficult and stressful for everyone involved. Leadership communication for clarifying the problem involves shedding light on critical dynamics and keeping focused on the topic. While accomplishing conflict communication from different perspectives (discourse), a synergy effect on every level of transformation is possible.

Emotions

Often 'dark points' surface during a period of transition. However, if these deeper emotions stay hidden, the situation cannot be solved effectively. Every opportunity to determine more information about the problem, as well as to express and clarify team understanding of the situation, adds to professional knowledge and supporting adequate actions.

More often than not, this process can be like diving into the subconscious, revealing the hidden struggles and wills that make human life strange and difficult, and the transformation journey compelling, unexpected and, in certain aspects, emotional. See tabulation of emotions and their counterparts in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Leading communication for transformation: Emotions and their counterparts. (**Source:** Adapted from Stolzenberg & Heberle 2021,106).

Emotions and their counterparts	
Sadness	Joy
Disgust	Approval
Anger	Fear
Surprise	Expectation

When it comes to clarifying the 'real problem', the entire range of emotions may be experiences within a leadership responsibility, from anger or sadness over the loss of possessions, to joy over new understanding and possible improvement.

Communication for transformation naturally contains disagreements, conflicts and problems. Disturbances, irritations and speculations are not simply embarrassing by-products of inter-personal collaboration, they are part of communication and human interaction. Whenever people are halfway honest and upfront with each other, crossings of thoughts might lead to words crashing into another. A value-oriented leadership mindset is necessary for the communicative solution of opposites, contradictions, polarisation and dilemmas, up to the recognition, acceptance and formulation of the real problem. Ultimately, suffering leads to overcoming comfort and empowering the further commitment to change.

Conclusion: Clarifying the problem

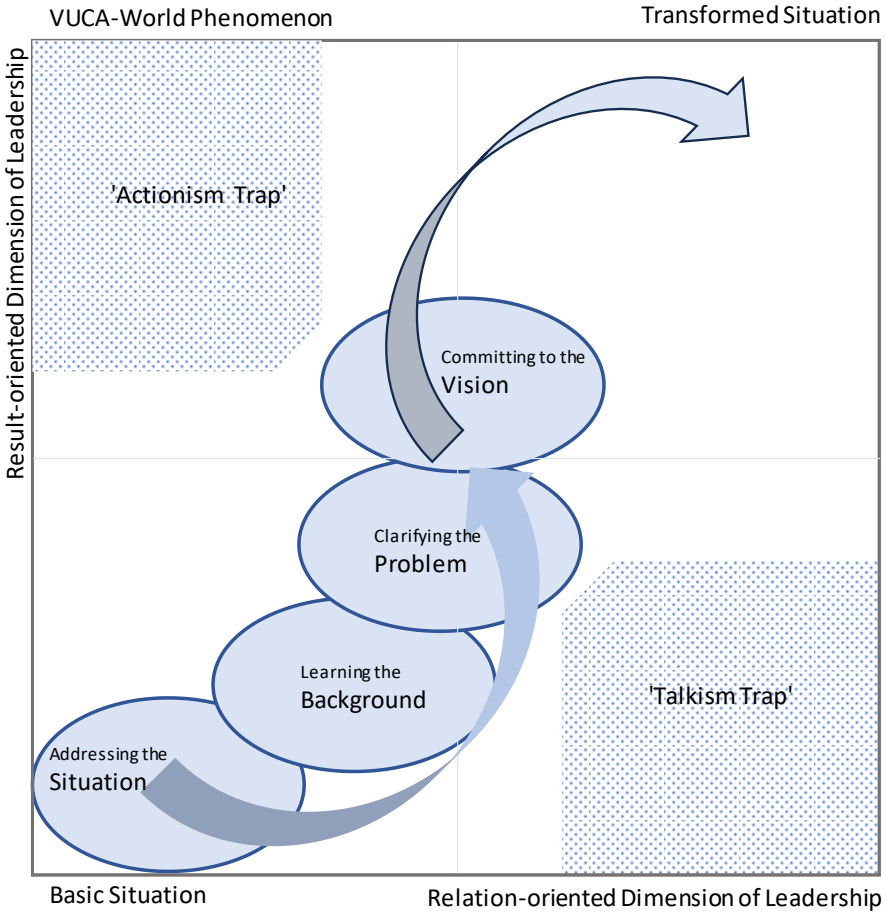
Leadership communication for transformation at this stage demands leading the discourse with those affected and making the effort to find the 'true pain point', which by implication refers to the real problem without bias. Finally, acceptance of the problem proposition establishes a sense of urgency and understanding, with Table 4.4 tabulating the key elements of clarifying the problem.

Table 4.4: Leading communication for transformation: Clarifying the problem **(Source**: Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialogue	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
3 Problem	What is the problem?	Clarifying the problem	Concern	Yes, we accept - the problem as it is.	Discourse

4.4.4 What is the vision? (Commitment)

'*Peripeteia*', is a Greek term that reflects a change in the course of action, the decisive turning point, the reversal of misfortune to luck, or vice versa. It was used for the first time as a term in the theory of tragedy in Aristotle's Poetics. This dramatic turning point between awareness of the problem and new hope, is one of the most powerful and personal moments in the drama. It is also the moment in filming, in which the camera moves very close to the human face. Within the scope of the S-Curve for transformation, committing to the vision is therefore placed in the upper quartile of the communication for transformation process as depicted in Design 4.4.



Design 4.4: Communication for transformation: Committing to the vision (**Source:** Own source).

The turning point is achieved when the density of knowledge is overbearing and the transition to change action needs to be made. This is also the moment that demands the greatest concentration from leadership in terms of a quality communication. Here at the centre of change is the lever that

has a decisive influence on the future: “Who are we and who do we wish to be in the future?”

Target images

Goals represent the wishes of people who are willing to change their actions, if this is associated with achievable positive consequences. This observation maps to action expectancy theories. Vroom (1964: **In summary**), describes how the value of an action arises from the consequences of the action, which he terms ‘relationship instrumentality. In this respect, Vroom (1964: **In summary**), considers three influencing factors of goal description, namely:

- **Valence**: Attractiveness.
- **Value of the consequences of actions**: Instrumentality.
- **Expectation of occurrence**—feasibility.

One goal is therefore an easily communicable description of a desirable future. A future that is worth fighting for, because it comes with the awareness that the current path has no future (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 5.2.3). A vision describes the imaginable picture of the future that can be celebrated at the end of the change-process.

Committing to the vision

Even if a good target image has a certain elegance and simplicity, the quality of the preparatory work should not be underestimated. As described in Chapters 3, Paragraph 3.4.1 to Paragraph 3.4.5, a large amount of data, facts, and syntheses are required. The transformation process requires both ‘head and heart’, i.e. analytical thinking paired with dreams, two steps forward and one step back, with a sufficient chance to limp, feel, argue and reflect. When this happens, the target image is anchored in the personal values of the stakeholders and creates a deep, lasting commitment.

The shared understanding of a target image is central to the success of transformation. From the author's experience, there are three reasons for this dispensation:

- **Visions give orientation:** Goal images simplify many individual detailed decisions, and thus make acceptance and understanding easier.
- **Visions are inspiring:** Goal images give hope and perspectives for motivation, even if the path to get there is 'painful'.
- **Visions align:** Target images support the coordination of upcoming change actions in a remarkably quick and good way.

Persuasion

A worthy vision may require sacrifices for a better future, but it never ignores the legitimate long-term interests or resistance of those involved. Skilful goal declarations therefore also acknowledge resistance, contrasts, and emerging difficulties. Schulz von Thun (2022b:63), terms this, "…rolling out a red carpet for the resistance", and appreciates the commendable core in the target address.

An effective target image also includes a rough assessment of resources and capacities. How this assessment works is also part of the communication process. The following acronyms provide a helpful compilation of criteria for goal formulations (Rauen, 2014:95 citing Whitmore, 2011):

- **SMART:** Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-phased.
- **PURE:** Positively, Understood, Relevant, Ethical.
- **CLEAR:** Challenging, Legal, Environmentally sound, Agreed, Recorded.

Whether the goal is ultimately a vision, strategy, or target, depends on the scope of the transformation project.

- In Buchinger's personal transformation (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1), a single clear goal definition is sufficient, namely 'survival'.
- In the environmental transformation of Rinaudi, it is a vision, "…a farmer-led movement across continents, regreening the lands, improving the livelihoods of millions and helping to combat climate change" (see Chapter, Paragraph 3.4.4).

What both examples have in common is the clarity gained from the previous situation approach, the know-how gained, and the clear awareness of the real problems and challenges, as is the case with the other transformation examples from Chapter 3:

- Organisational transformation of the IHK: An always lively and practice-oriented network that promotes success in the regional economy with little time and financial investment (see Chapter 3, Paragraph.4.2).

- Social Transformation Seehaus Concept: A youth penal system as an alternative to closed penal systems, a concept that prepares offenders for a life without crime (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3).

- Technological Transformation of the XELLAR Company: A modular, digital, ergonomic and energy-efficient production system for innovative industrial customers: 'Lean, Green and Digital' (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

Conclusion: Commitment to the vision

With a plethora of books about leadership and visioning, two criteria manifests as key for the further success of transformation:

- Agreement based on true will, suitable to change the problem.
- Communication against the background of plausible feasibility from previous research.

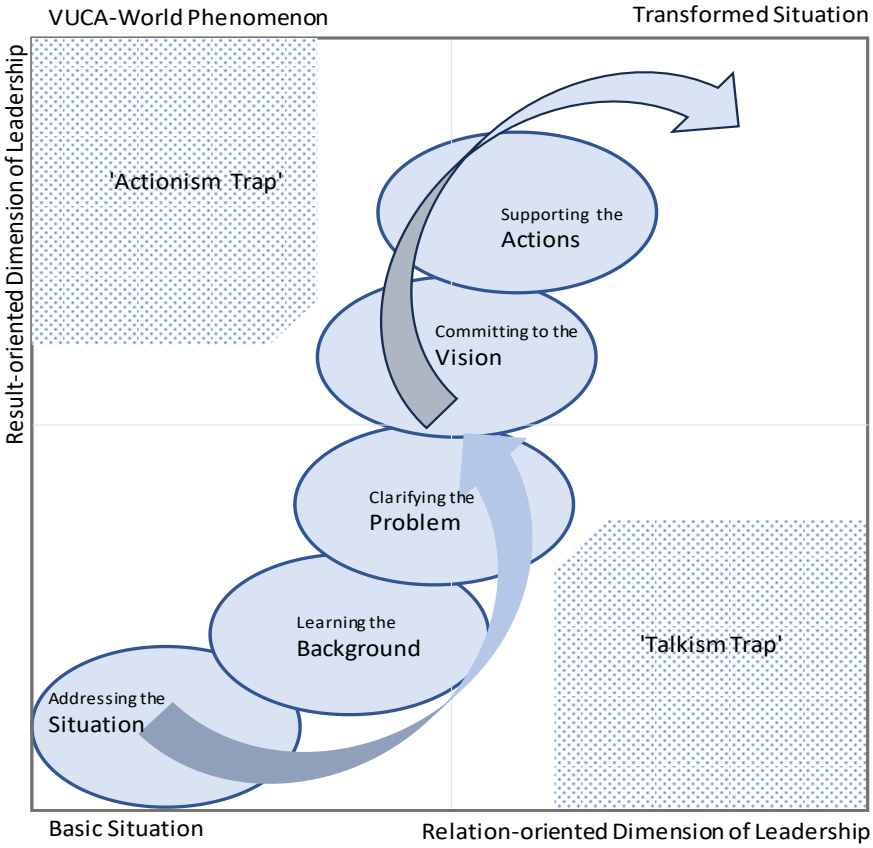
Tabulated in Table 4.5, is the fourth stage of the transformation process, which describes the commitment for a transformative vision. Based on the clarity problem as outlined in Paragraph 4.4.3, the key question is now: "What is the vision for the future?" Committing to a vision involves the leadership element of persuasion, giving perspectives and, ultimately, reaching commitment to lead the much needed transformation actions.

Table 4.5: Leading communication for transformation: Commitment to the vision (**Source:** Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialogue	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
4 Vision	What is the vision?	Committing to the vision	Perspectives	Yes, we want a vision of the future	Persuasion

4.4.5 What is the change action? (Support)

The primary purpose of the first four process steps is to build momentum to make major change possible. Leadership communication now serves to explain the 'big picture' to every stakeholder repeatedly, the overall goals, and the way each project fits into the whole, as graphically depicted in Design 4.5.



Design 4.5: Communication for transformation: Supporting the change-actions (**Source:** Own source).

Those working on different activities aim for the same long-term goal. They can even anticipate what priorities apply to them, what conflicts may arise, and what needs to be done to stay on track for change, including supporting actions. In order to better assess the need for professional change management, the following two criteria are helpful, according to Stolzenberg and Heberle (2021:7):

- Number of people affected by change, and
- novelty value of the change content.

The intensity and scope of change management escalates with the increasing number of participants, or with the level of novelty value, as the following two examples show:

- For Otto Buchinger, a wilful decision and the cooperation of his closest environment such as family and friends was enough (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1).
- For the global agro-forestry movement, professional support is required from global organisations such as World Vision (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.4)

Leadership and management

Even though leadership communication is central to every transformation project, the upcoming change actions usually involve numerous people. Systematically separating projects, budgeting, planning resources, project controlling, which translates into 'the essence of management'. Transformation is not a process for leadership alone; excellent management is relevant to success. As a result, change management has now become a recognised subject, and Peter Drucker's publications (1954) on the basics of management represent an important start to the process. The differences and overlaps between management and leadership are formulated and can, within the context, and for the purpose of this research, be summarised as follows:

- Leadership builds or transforms systems.
- Management works in a system and keeps it working.

Together, both skills result in ‘highly successful transformation efforts’, which is drawn from Kotter (2012:134), on the combination of leadership and management. This fact comes as a surprise, since Kotter is a strong advocate of the distinction between leadership and management (Kotter, 2012:29).

In addition to technical expertise, communication skills are required at all levels, as well as financial or technological expertise, underpinned by solid management. It takes practice and the opportunity to make mistakes to learn new skills, behaviour and attitudes. Furthermore, it takes leadership behaviour according to the communicated vision seen in the often-used phrase that reads: “I can say whatever I want, ultimately my example will be followed”.

Managing change actions

Change actions can be understood as ‘nested recurring feedback units’, which were referred to by Miller, Galanter and Pibram (1991) as ‘TOTE’ units (**T**est-**O**perate-**T**est-**E**xit) between the starting and target positions. Each individual action is like a mini-transformation and should therefore be taken very seriously as an important contribution to the whole. For practical use, a task manual could be structured in one-lined actions with the following columns, irrespective if manual or IT-supported:

- What is the change or problem? (understanding)
- What is the action? (clarity)
- Who is responsible? (responsibility)
- What is the timeline? (urgency or priority)
- What is the budget / support? (feasibility)
- What is the result we want to celebrate? (motivation)

Team-actions

Leadership means not knowing every detail in the middle of the change action. The level of detail depends on the scope of the project and the team's ability to take responsibility. When teams are prepared and trained over a

long period of time, it is easier to delegate and transform more quickly than when a complex topic is to be implemented with little intensive preparation. It is easy to imagine that many details are highly relevant for a mechanical engineering concept. Personal transformation can only be achieved if the battle is fought in detail. We have seen this with Buchinger, the latter who had to carefully plan and implement times for exercise and meditation.

Small teams are more efficient than a large team, and the organic team grows with the transformation success, according to the following examples as outlined in Chapter 3:

- Seehaus started as a small team of long-time friends.
- XELLAR was built within nine months without a research department.
- Buchinger fasted for 19 days (Wilhelmi 2020:19).
- Rinaudi had a ground-breaking insight in 1983 and only gained worldwide fame around 2012.

Quick wins

The art of leadership lies in active opportunity to maintain the tension between pressure and success. If every line in the plan is an action that is supposed to deliver a result, the art of communication, is to write these lines in such a way that they reveal demanding, yet quick successes in order to keep motivation high. The smarter the scaling in central management responsibility, the easier it is to coordinate and oversee delegated tasks. The selection and agreement of individual action goals is an important leadership responsibility.

This against the background of a digitalised VUCA world that moves faster and has more information available than ever before. For this reason, Kotter (2012:183), draws the conclusion that, "…the twenty-first-century employee will need to know more about both leadership and management than did his or her twentieth-century counterpart". It is the leader, like a general in war, who is responsible for all actions taken, including costs and results. The level of detail in the planning from a leadership perspective therefore depends on what level of detail is needed to present adequate quick wins.

Conclusion: Support for the change actions

It is the change-action that makes all transformation preparation, communication, and efforts thus far become reality. While change-management is seldom seen as part of leadership, in the opinion of this author, the same attention and thoroughness is needed for these important change-actions as the other structured elements of transformation. At this stage, typically the main costs are invested, therefore the recurring feedback-units with quick wins serve as important indicators for the success of the decided change actions.

Tabulated in Table 4.6, is the sixth stage of the transformation process, which involves describing the supportive elements for transformative change-actions. Based on background knowledge as outlined in Paragraph 4.4.2 and the vision for transformation, the key question is now: "What is the adequate change-action?" This combines the leadership element of management with the involvement and agreement of those responsible to ensure short term results for motivation.

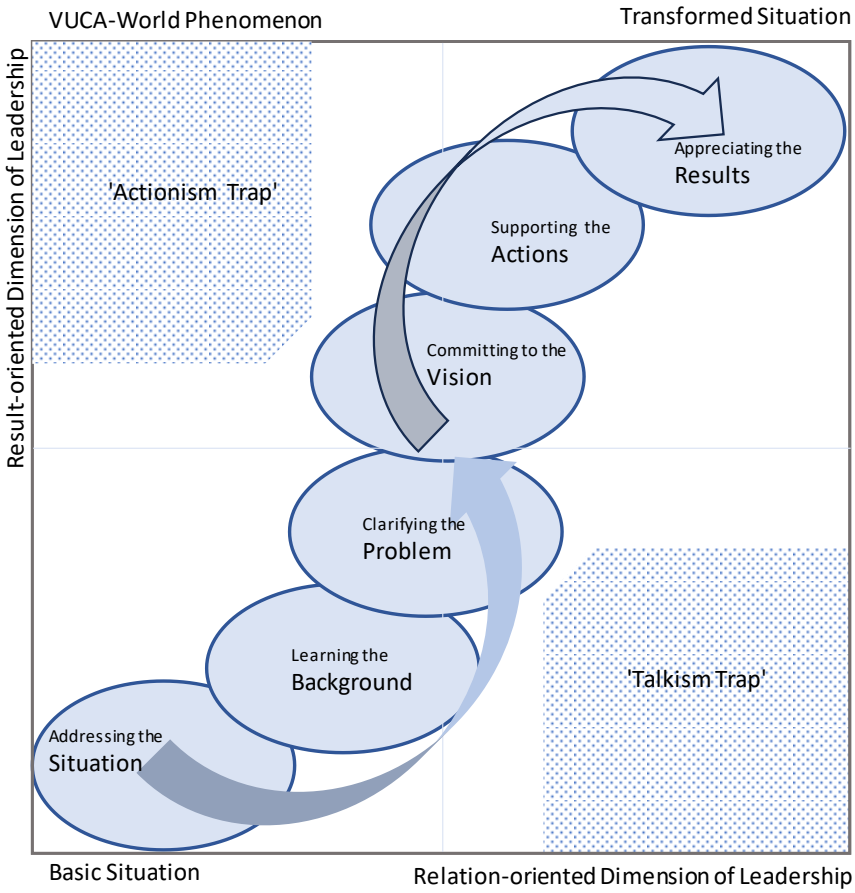
Table 4.6: Leading communication for transformation: Supporting the change-actions (**Source:** Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialogue	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
5 Action	What is the change-action?	Supporting the change-actions	Quick wins	Yes, we move-acting for change	Management

4.4.6 What is the result? (Appreciation)

It is not the number of participants in IHK networks; it is not the number of boys who have already been re-socialised through the Seehaus project; it is not the number of trees that are growing again; or the fancy machines that are at customer's homes; these results are not exclusively that which makes transformation valuable, even though they are important. It is the happy eyes of the people that make major change successful; the pride of having accomplished and achieved something; the joy of walking through a

forest where there was previously a desert according to Rinaudo (2022:229); a Seehaus Alumni bringing his family with him; a machine operator being entrusted with a fabulous new machine. It is the discovery of the understanding: “Yes — we transformed!” An essential element of leadership at this stage is communicating appreciation for the results earned, which is graphically depicted in Design 4.6.



Design 4.6: Communication for transformation: Appreciating the results (**Source:** Own source).

The instrument to turn winners into heroes is planned reflection: The active follow-up in the manager's calendar to ensure results. While it is acknowledged that deviations are also part of it, the leadership mindset must include a desire to ‘catch’ their team doing something right. The rest can then be easily improved. Nothing is more motivating than visible success, even if further transformation efforts still need to be made.

Value of leadership appreciation

Transformation personal and inter-personal relations include a balance of virtues and counter-virtues, or more specifically, articulated appreciation or critical confrontation. It is precisely the fact that these challenges have been overcome that make praise valuable. Helwig (1967), described this balance as 'the Square of Values', evaluated in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.5 as the new value paradigm for transformation.

Over time in the name of 'human dignity', some communication and behavioural ideals are misconceived. The appreciative behaviours of leaders are surely a value to be aspired to, and not only a unipolar target definition. Appreciation is important, but in its exaggerated form, it can appear insignificant, idealised, and almost ingratiating, degenerating into 'weak flattery'. Leadership appreciation is therefore valued equally as much as the courage to provide clear communication and to criticise, confront, and to set definite boundaries within the former steps of transformation.

Theory of exchange

The value of appreciation is explained by the Theory of Exchange, which relates to human behaviour in relationships. This theory assumes that social interactions can be explained on the basis of the exchange of rewards (returns) and costs that arise between two or more interaction partners. According to Brinkmann (2018:74), the key statement is: "The relationship between employer and employee or producer and consumer is typically an exchange relationship in which ideally there is a balanced benefit for both sides" [Free translation from the German by the author of this thesis]. Benefits or rewards are understood to include: love, status, information, money, goods or services. The transformation examples from Chapter 3 show the different forms of Appreciation for Transformation:

- Buchinger was made an honorary citizen of the city of Bad Pyrmont on his 75th birthday in 1953. The former Buchinger Clinic is continued by the family of his son Otto to this day (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1).

- On its 20th anniversary, the Seehaus Penal Service publicly celebrated a successful programme for social transformation in dealing with crime, in accordance with the basic aim of revolutionising the penal system (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3).
- Since 2018, when its first newly-innovated production system was launched, XELLAR has celebrated every assembly-ready system as production begins (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

Culture of heroes

Even today, modern organisations and nations are culturally defined by stories about heroic transformation, about their collective selves, their victories and defeats, their heroes and foes, their distinctive values and ways of being, all of which are encoded in the tales we tell to each other and enjoy. Stories that involve people being heroic or villainous, and the emotions of joy and outrage that are triggered as a result, serve as a critical base for human transformation efforts. Numerous national holidays, listed by Schüttig (2017: **Online**), demonstrate this culture-forming aspect of joint transformation: War successes are commemorated, as are dates that memorialise the founding of the state, independence celebrations or a victorious revolution, as well as in the case of one country in particular — Germany — gratitude for unity.

Conclusion: Appreciation for the results

To conclude this final step of leadership communication for transformation results, the obvious analogy reads: “Tell me how you appreciate, and I tell you how you lead”. Appreciation and valued success provide a moment of rest from the efforts of life and work. The Valleys of VUCA are ‘cursed’ with labour, hemmed with necessities, trumped up with frustrations and doomed to perpetual planning, confusion and anxieties. Even God celebrated his creation accordingly: “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” (Holy Bible, 2011: **Genesis 1:31**).

The tabulation in Table 4.7 below reflects the key elements of appreciation, mapping the ideologies as upheld in this chapter.

Table 4.7: Leading communication for transformation: Appreciating the results (**Source:** Own source).

Process Element	Key Question	Element of Communication	Element for Dialogue	Element for Understanding	Element of Leadership
6 Result	What is the result?	Appreciating the results	Wellbeing	Yes, we transformed to a new situation	Reflection

As reflected in Table 4.7, this final stage of one transformation process describes the result of the undertaken transformation effort. Based on the vison outlined in Paragraph 4.4.3, the key question is now: "What is the result?" This involves the leadership element of reflecting on the outcomes of the actions taken in the previous stage, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the changes made, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and identifying areas for further improvement. The most important and main element of leadership communication is showing appreciation for the result, giving thanks to the people who enabled the transformation, and caring for wellbeing with dialogue to communicate the understanding: "Yes, we transformed to a next level and a higher value". Key results include consolidating gains and empowering for more change, while anchoring changed approaches in the culture and allowing for storytelling to celebrate heroes.

4.5 CONCLUSION—LEADING COMMUNICATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

This chapter answered the question: "What purposeful structured communication concept could be followed for leading transformation to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon?" In answering this question, the transformation process was further elaborated to a communication concept, according to the structured questions developed and outlined in Chapter 3 and purposefully designed within Chapter 4.

An overview of the developed key elements of leadership communication for transformation translates in the tabulation shown in Table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8: Leading communication for transformation: Key elements (**Source:** Own source).

Process Structure	Key Questions	Elements of Communication	Elements for Dialog	Elements for Understanding	Elements of Leadership
1 Situation	What is the situation?	Addressing the situation	Resonance	Yes, we see- the situation as it is	Sensitiveness
2 Back-ground	What is the background?	Questioning for back-ground knowledge	Learning	Yes, we learn from past actions	Dialogue
3 Problem	What is the problem?	Clarifying the problem	Concern	Yes, we accept - the problem as it is.	Discourse
4 Vision	What is the vision?	Committing to the vision	Perspectives	Yes, we want a future vision	Persuasion
5 Action	What is the change-action?	Supporting the change-actions	Quick wins	Yes, we move-acting for change	Management
6 Result	What is the result?	Appreciating the results	Wellbeing	Yes, we transformed to a new situation	Reflection

Based on the transformation structure ideated within Chapter 3, Table 4.8 includes key questions of transformation and leadership communication elements with resulting components of dialogue and understanding.

In the next chapter, based on communication for transformation, supportive correlations between the key elements of communication and transformation will be further developed and elaborated upon.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 5

This chapter aims to answer the following research question: "What are the correlations between the key elements of communication and transformation in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics?" By implication this chapter would then also meet the requirements set for the associated secondary research objective.

In answering this question, the following key elements of communication will be further interrogated, drawn from explicit knowledge gleaned from authoritative literature and this author´s own tacit knowledge, as a leading industry practitioner:

- Cognitive correlations between the elements of purposeful structured transformation process.
- Multi-process correlations for on-going transformation.

More specifically, the proposed chapters and their demarcated parts in context of the overall research are graphically depicted in the Figure 5.1. below.

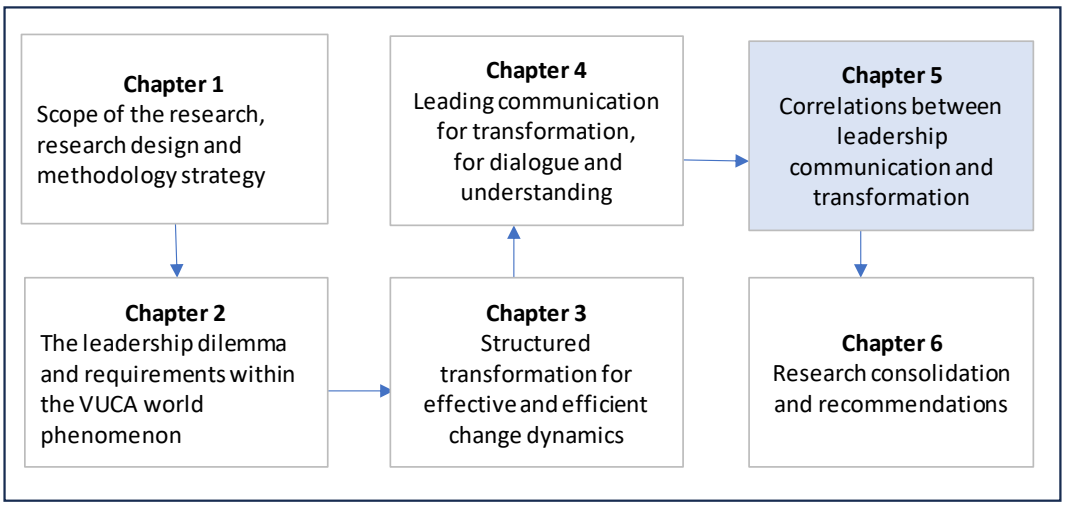

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 5.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This chapter will address (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- Cognitive correlations.

- Multi-transformation correlations.
- Logical correlations of leading transformation.

CHAPTER 5:
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION AND TRANSFORMATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION (DEVELOPMENT)

The process of analysing successful transformation examples in order to show the tangent planes between them, is based on accepted scientific technique. In this instance, in terms of the technique employed, predefined ‘plots’ will be created, which show narrative events in a sequence, a fixed process of transformation. Joseph Campbell's 'Monomyth', (Campbell, 2008), serves as an example of this technique. Even if Campbell sees his 17 steps (Case, 2016: **Online**), simply as ‘hints from the inspired past’, they led to entire film series such as Star Wars: A New Hope.

However, the belief in a ‘plot’ as a magic formula or technique is responsible for a plethora of literature on the subject, yet a high failure rate is evident from modern transformation processes that fail. A ‘plot’ as a single entity can never work in isolation. This is why the focus on transformation should be shifted to communication. Communication is based on character and competence. It is people, not models, that can naturally result in transformation. It is the actions of specific, flawed and fascinating individuals that result in dialogue and understanding for efficient and effective transformation.

Even if the structure developed thus far may look like yet another standard ‘plot’, the communicative leadership approach selected stands in contrast to traditional attempts to decode transformation. The structure is not the result of a successful transformation process, but merely serves the initiator of the transformation with an internal logic for the ever-important communication process. The various references and connections that make transformation both human and professional are developed in this chapter**.**

5.2 COGNITIVE CORRELATIONS

The human brain has the ability to think in correlations, connecting stages of transformation to efficient and effective change dynamics. Logic thought, is worth considering when anticipating communication for transformation. A leader who feels comfortable with the inner logic of transformation and has competencies at his/her disposal, which furthermore are personally tailored, by implication brings contentment. Moreover, such a combination of professionalism in result-oriented actions and humanity in relation-oriented communication for transformation is considered a personal asset in negotiating a transformation process. Due to its inner logic, this continuous process allows leaders and participants at each stage of the transformation to inform and influence each other. This is therefore applicable to any transformation area, whether personal, organisational or social (transformation for everyone).

Cognitive control theory

Based on the theory of cognitive control (Fritsche, Jonas and Frey 2006: 494-503), combined with this author's tacit industry knowledge, people are more willing to change their behaviour or even make sacrifices if the following three cognitive and qualitative forms of perception of control are evident:

- **Visibility and truth:** People want to predict and receive a target image of the changed situation and are sensitive to the truth.
- **Participation and team action:** Recipients want to feel that they can influence something (preferably directly) and make a contribution to the team's success.
- **Purpose and Value:** Actors want to understand why the change is necessary, i.e. What sense the change makes and what value it has?

As is evident from the examples cited in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 relating to a purposeful structured communication, the supportive elements that

would serve for effective and efficient transformation are elaborated upon below.

5.2.1 Correlation: Situation and vision (visibility and truth)

The visibility of the situation determines the true objectives of the goals. This also applies in reverse: The visibility of the goals is determined by the truth of the situation.

***Example*:** Fasting, as outlined in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.1. According to Dr Francoise Wilhelmi de Toledo, a specialist in fasting, we live in a 'time in which the over-nourished people have overtaken the undernourished people in number" (Wilhelmi, 2020:11). Gaining through renunciation is therefore a suitable vision for many people.

5.2.2 Correlation: Team knowledge and team action (participation)

The participation of the team determines the speed and quality of the change actions. And vice versa: The speed and quality of the team action, is determined by the team's ability to learn.

Example: IHK, as outlined in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.2. Network groups and topics arise in interactive dialogue with those responsible for the company. If too few participants register for a network topic, the meeting will not take place and the company will not incur any costs. This model is a constantly self-transforming network organisation according to the current needs of the company's employees.

5.2.3 Correlation: Problem and transformation results (purpose)

The depth (cost) of concern determines the value of transformation success. And vice versa, the value of transformation success is determined by the depth (cost) of previous concerns.

Example: Seehaus concept for juvenile detention, as outlined in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3. Merckle caused social concern among friends, acquaintances and his family, and within the Ministry of Justice. Society's trust in the project is as a result rewarded. The effect can be seen in the high training rate of 98% after completed internships, as well as in the high level of interest from the public who are regularly invited to the Seehaus Festival.

5.2.4 The cognitive Leadership brain

Cognitive correlations between leadership communication and transformation are tabulated in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Cognitive correlations between leadership communication and transformation (**Source:** Own source).

Relation-oriented Process Elements of Transformation	**Cognitive Correlations "Leaders Brain"**	**Result-oriented Process Elements of Transformation**
1 Situation	Visibility and Truth	4 Vision
2 Background	Participation and Team	5 Action
3 Problem	Purpose and Value	6 Result

The significance of these correlations is the effective and efficient possibility of a quick review in terms of the age-old adage: "If a decision seems wrong, check again". Leadership communication has no value if, due to missing truth or team learning, the problem or vision is inefficient and ineffective for transforming a situation to the good.

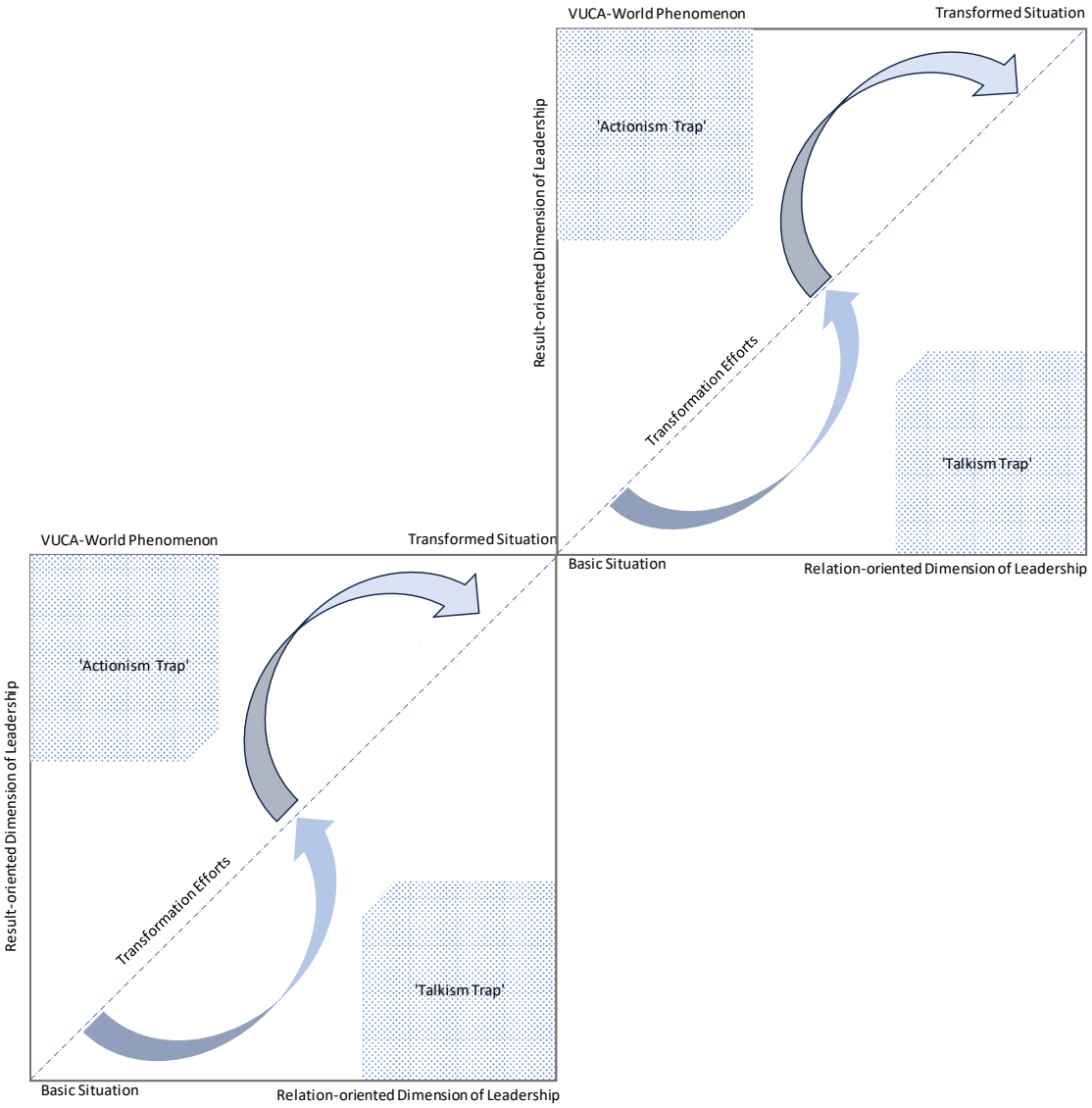
The result of cognitive logic with supportive correlations between the process and communication elements supports efficiency instead of ending in VUCA traps. Even efficient transformation may require going back to a prior phase to iterate and refine until the vision, change actions and results are successful in transforming the situation, background and problem. Therefore, the described correlations are supporting leadership communication because the developed transformative concept is a nonlinear, iterative communication process, flexible enough for leading (and learning) in VUCA crisis times.

5.3 MULTI TRANSFORMATION CORRELATIONS

It would culminate in an optic illusion in the VUCA world phenomenon to assume a transformation is completed by one transmuted situation. The contrary is more realistic: Each transformation has either parallel alterations connected with actions and/or, is leading to further transformations.

5.3.1 The inline multi transformation

Purposefully structured leadership communication for transformation is suitably applicable to be applied inline to further transformation projects, as graphically depicted in Design 5.1 below.



Design 5.1: Inline-transformation correlation for effective and efficient chance dynamics (**Source:** Own source).

Design 5.1 graphically depicts how once successfully transformed, the transformed situation reciprocally serves as the basic situation for further transformation. This correlation is underpinned by the following transformation examples drawn from Chapter 3:

- At the beginning, Rinaudo's focus was to help the rural population plant trees. Meanwhile an extensive grassroots adoption of the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration method was developed, with more and more NGOs collaborating with farmers and community groups (Rightlivelihood, 2018: **Online**) (see also Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.4)

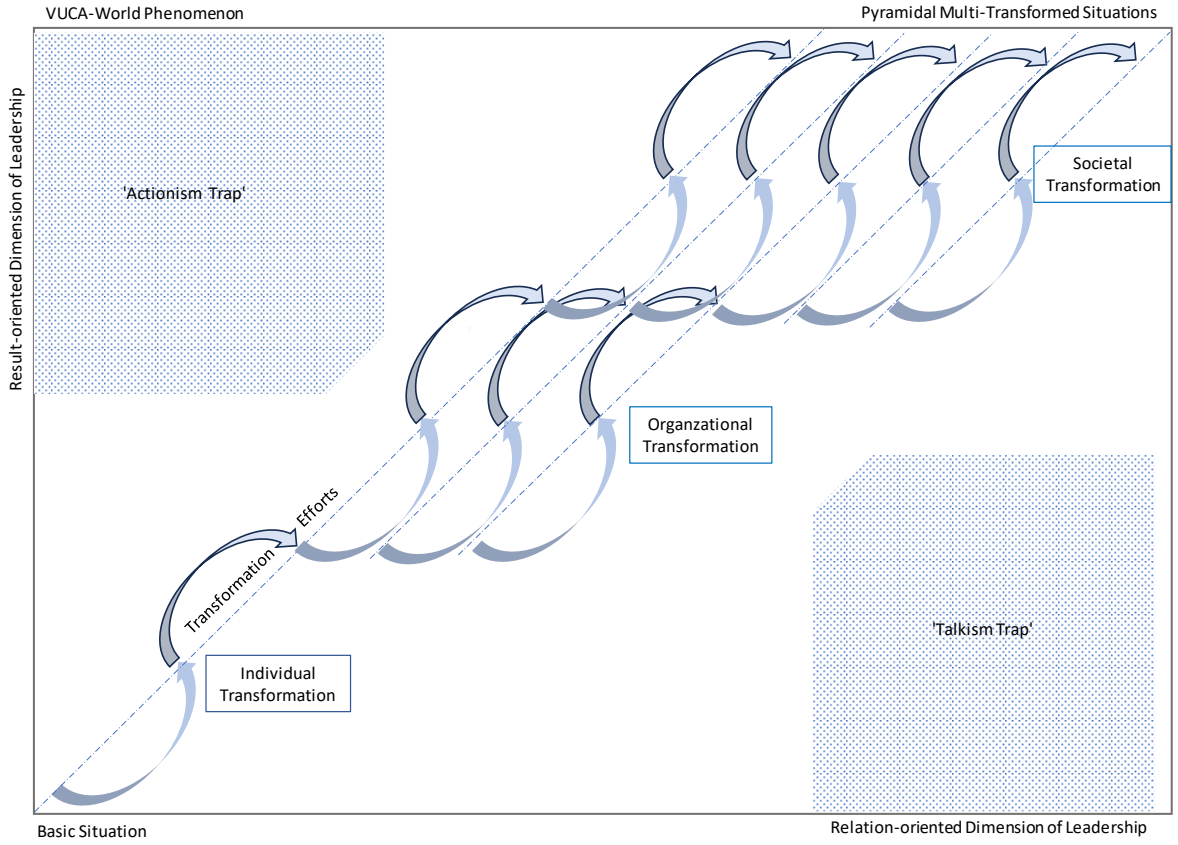
- As a result of Roth's intention to transform the inline roll-forming process, three lines of whole modular production systems have now been developed, several patents have been created, and numerous innovation awards have been given to the XELLAR production system and the development team (see Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.5).

5.3.2 The organic multi transformation

As elaborated upon earlier, leadership communication for transformation is finally recognised as a 'thinking process' in which individuation and socialization are correlated. More often than not, the transformation starts individually and then leads to organizational or even societal transformation. This correlation is underpinned by the following transformation examples, cited from the example in Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.4.3:

- **Individual transformation:** "It all began with a personal transformation that the young German experienced during a visit to a prison in the USA. The entrepreneur's son Tobias Merckle said: "…I felt that something was really drawing me to the prisoners" [**A-1**]. "…It was a feeling of love" (Zehendner, 2021:28).
- **Organisational transformation:** "His contract with the Ministry of Justice was enabled as part of the Chance Project, allowing him to establish a free-form penal system as part of the juvenile penal system" [**B-2**] (Zehndner, 2021,93).
- **Societal transformation:** "In keeping with his basic aim of revolutionising the penal system, Merckle has created a successful programme for social transformation in dealing with crime. In addition to helping offenders, there are also programmes for victim support; the enabling of victims and perpetrators to meet in conversation as a contribution to 'restorative justice'; a preventative self-assertion training for children; support of social work hours for youngsters, leisure groups and victim empathy training in prisons. A new development has been the establishment of a Seehaus Academy as a training and further education option for professionals and interested parties, according to personal observations." This is one example how a personal transformation

became ‘organic’ and causing multiple transformed situations. This effect is herewith termed the organic multi transformation and graphically depicted in Design 5.2:



Design 5.2: Organic multi-transformation correlation for effective and efficient chance dynamics (**Source:** Own source).

To monitor progress, leaders can keep an overview, on different stages of transformation, by using a table mapping different transformation projects. This prevents the possibility of becoming ‘lost in transformation’, as shown by the failure example in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.4.3. Such a tabulation is shown in Table 5.2 serving as an example.

Table 5.2: Leader's overview of multiple transformation projects (**Source:** Own source).

Process Elements of Transformation	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Further…
1 Situation				
2 Background				
3 Problem				
4 Vision				
5 Action				
6 Result				

5.4 CONCLUSION: LOGICAL CORRELATIONS OF LEADING TRANSFORMATION

This chapter provided an answer to the following research question: "What are the correlations between the key elements of communication and transformation in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics?"

In answering this question, the key elements of communication were identified, namely:

- **Cognitive correlations**: Between the two dimensions of leadership (refer Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.2).
- **Multi-process correlations**: Mapping the three approaches for transformation (refer Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.3).

In addition to the above, in this chapter the systemic correlation between the communication content known as the 'leadership brain', and, which prevents the blocking of vicious circles, was shown. Furthermore, the cognitive correlation within the purposeful structure for transformation were listed.

SUMMARY CHAPTER 6

This chapter answers the primary research question, forming the crux of the research, which reads as follows: “What key elements and purposeful structured leadership can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics?” By implication this chapter would then also meet the requirements set for the associated primary research objective.

Deviating from the traditional research approach of verbatim citing from the research content reflecting the attained conclusions as a result of the research and by implication confirming key elements as set out in Chapter 1 of this thesis, a more appropriate approach in line with industry dictates (where applicable) will be followed, whereby only the attained ‘consolidated’ findings will be reflected. This approach furthermore is underpinned by the fact that each of the investigative questions, were specifically attributed a separate chapter within the ambit of the research, which would make a repeat of known answers, an exercise in futility.

The analytical process followed thus far is graphically depicted in Figure 6.1, which places the chapters in context within the overall thesis objectives, and furthermore indicates the relative positioning of this chapter.

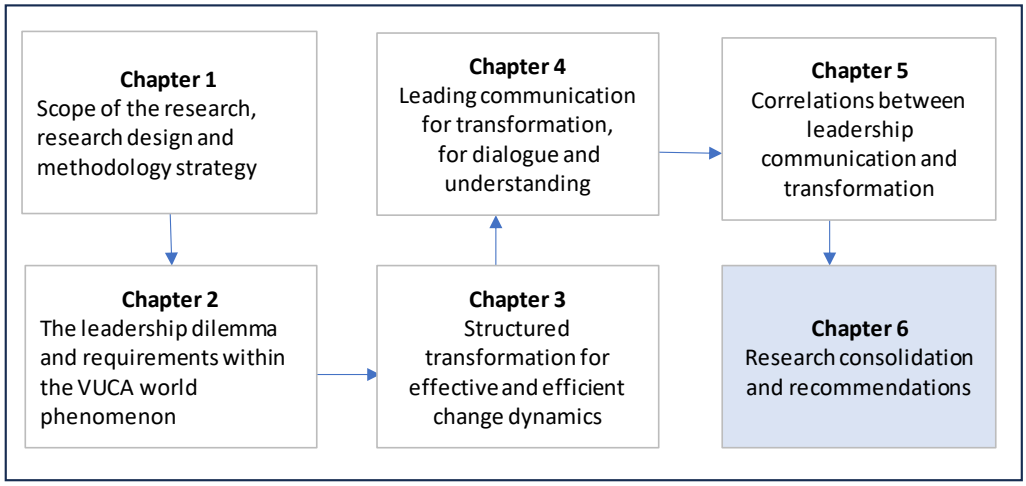

Chapter 1
Scope of the research, research design and methodology strategy
Chapter 2
The leadership dilemma and requirements within the VUCA world phenomenon
Chapter 3
Structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics
Chapter 4
Leading communication for transformation, for dialogue and understanding
Chapter 5
Correlations between leadership communication and transformation
Chapter 6
Research consolidation and recommendations

Figure 6.1: Chapters in context of the overall research and relative position of this chapter.

This chapter will address (amongst others) the following key aspects:

- Conclusions stemming from the research.
- Mitigation of the research problem: The Transformative Communication Concept (TCC).
- The primary and secondary research questions and primary and secondary research objectives revisited.
- The research hypothesis statement revisited.
- Significance of the research.
- Avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 6:
RESEARCH CONSOLIDATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The evolutionary nature of communication dynamics as found within the context of the VUCA world is highlighted in this chapter, with a revisit of key elements addressed within the ambit of the research for implementation. More specifically, the ultimate objective of this research study was to formulate key elements and purposeful structured leadership that can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS STEMMING FROM THE RESEARCH

The research returned the following findings in terms of structured transformation for effective and efficient change dynamics (See Tabulation in Table 6.1)

Table 6.1.: Overview transformation structure according to the analysis results of the transformation examples (from Chapter 3) (**Source:** Own source)

Transformation Structure	Process Elements	Leadership Elements
A – INFORMATION	1 Situation	Sensitiveness
	2 Knowledge	Dialog
B – DECISION	3 Problem	Discourse
	4 Vision	Persuasion
C - CHANGE	5 Action	Management
	6 Result	Reflection

The research returned the following findings in terms of leading communication for transformation for dialogue and understanding: Key elements (see tabulation in Table 6.2)

Table 6.2: Leading communication for transformation: Key elements (from Chapter 4) (**Source:** Own source).

Process Structure	**Key Questions**	**Elements of Communication**	**Elements for Dialog**	**Elements for Understanding**	**Elements of Leadership**
1 Situation	What is the situation?	Addressing the situation	Resonance	Yes, we see- the situation as it is	Sensitiveness
2 Back-ground	What is the background?	Questioning for back-ground knowledge	Learning	Yes, we leaned – from past actions	Dialogue
3 Problem	What is the problem?	Clarifying the problem	Concern	Yes, we accept - the problem as it is.	Discourse
4 Vision	What is the vision?	Committing to the vision	Perspectives	Yes, we want a future vision	Persuasion
5 Action	What is the change-action?	Supporting the change-actions	Quick wins	Yes, we move-acting for change	Management
6 Result	What is the result?	Appreciating the results	Wellbeing	Yes, we transformed to a new situation	Reflection

The research returned the following findings in terms of cognitive correlations between leadership communication and transformation (see tabulation in Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Cognitive correlations between leadership communication and transformation (from Chapter 5) (**Source:** Own source).

Relation-oriented Process Elements of Transformation	**Cognitive Correlations "Leaders Brain"**	**Result-oriented Process Elements of Transformation**
1 Situation	Visibility and Truth	4 Vision
2 Background	Participation and Team	5 Action
3 Problem	Purpose and Value	6 Result

The research returned the following findings in terms of leader's overview of multiple transformation projects (see Tabulation in Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Leader's overview of multiple transformation projects (from Chapter 5) (**Source:** Own source).

Leadership overview transformation	**Project 1**	**Project 2**	**Project 3**	*and further*
Situation				
Background				
Problem				
Vision				
Actions				
Result				

6.3 MITIGATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM: THE TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNICATION CONCEPT (TCC)

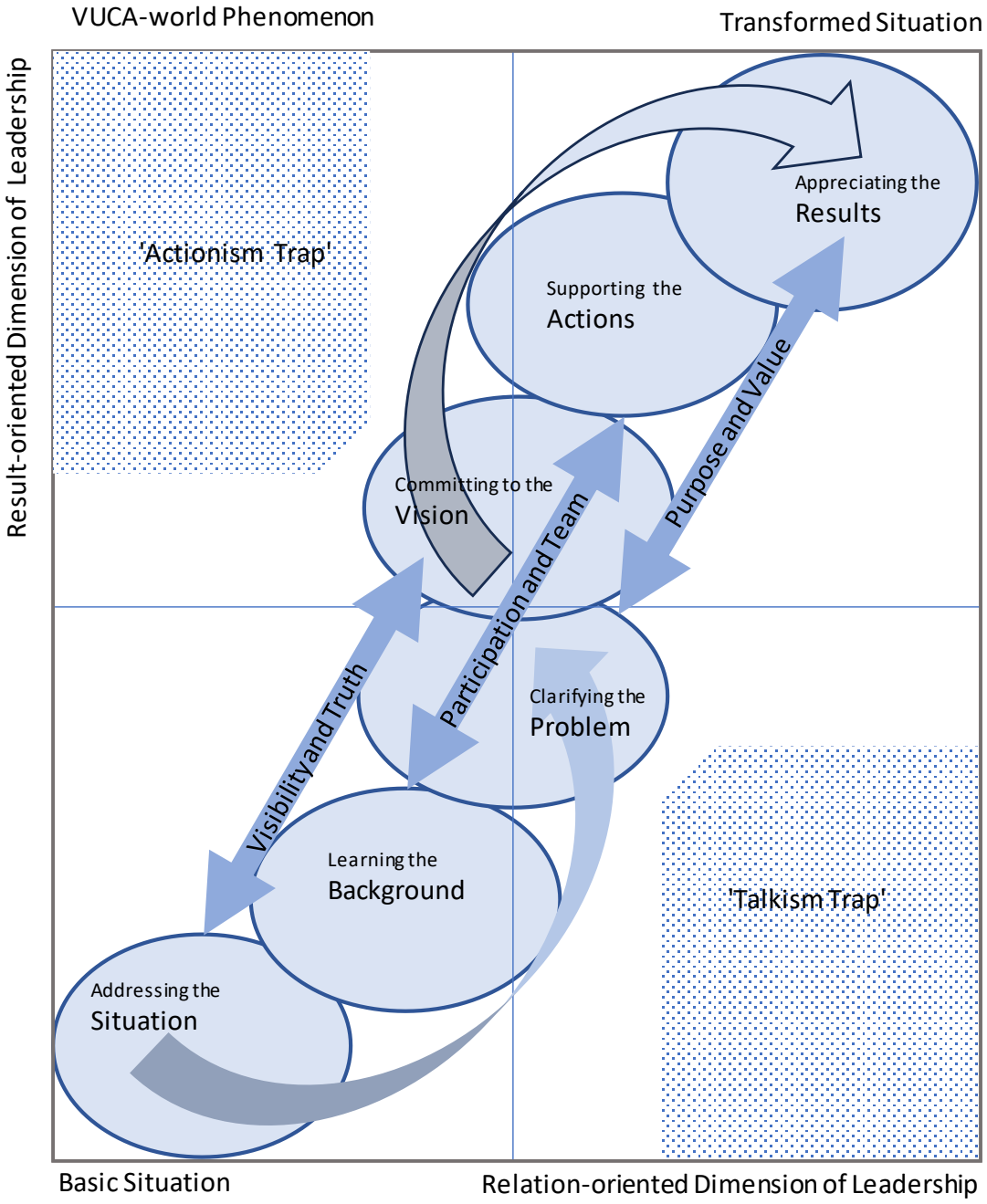
The research problem researched within the ambit of this thesis, by implication 'closes the research gap' drawn from Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.3,

which reads as follows: “More often than not, leadership communication does not facilitate transforming dynamics, primarily attributed to the complexity of the ever-present VUCA (Volatile, Uncertainty, Complex and Ambiguous) world phenomenon, which by implication, results in poor dialogue and understanding, and in turn, leads to ineffective and inefficient change actions”.

For these adverse reasons resulting from the VUCA phenomenon and by implication in effective mitigation of the research problem, this researcher embarked on a structured analysis in this research study highlighting:

- The leadership dilemmas and requirements due to the VUCA world phenomenon and its value propositions, which were elaborated upon in Chapter 2.
- The formulation of a structured transformation process that can be applied with respect to leadership communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, and that would lead to effective and efficient change dynamics, which were elaborated upon in Chapter 3.
- The purposeful development of a structured communication concept that could be followed for leading transformation to ensure improved dialogue and understanding in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, which were elaborated upon in Chapter 4.
- Identification and development of the correlations between the key elements of communication and transformation in supporting effective and efficient change dynamics which were elaborated upon in Chapter 5.

Design 6.1 graphically depicts the developed Transformative Communication Concept (TCC) to ensure improved dialogue and understanding and to result in effective and efficient change dynamics, which implementation would in terms of the findings of this research study, effectively mitigate the research problem.



Design 6.1: The **T**ransformative **C**ommunication **C**oncept (TCC) to ensure dialog and understanding, and to result in effective and efficient change dynamics (**Source:** Own source).

By implication, Design 6.1 provides an answer to the primary research question and reciprocally meet the requirements set for the primary research objective, which are repeated here from Chapter 1, Paragraphs 1.4 and Chapter 1, Paragraph 1. 6:

- **Primary research question:** "What key elements and purposeful structured leadership can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics?
- **Primary research objective:** "To formulate key elements and purposeful structured leadership that can be applied with respect to communication for transformation in dealing with the VUCA world phenomenon that would not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics".

6.4 THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES REVISITED

Following to the unique structure of this research, a separate chapter was dedicated to each secondary research question and its associated secondary research objective and subsequently interrogated to finite detail, which obviates a verbatim repeat of the findings in this paragraph.

6.5 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT REVISITED

The research hypothesis based on the primary theme of the research study reads as follows: $\mathbf{H_0}$: There is a positive correlation between purposeful leadership communication and structured transformation following the VUCA world phenomenon, to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding, but also result in effective and efficient change dynamics.

As a result of the research undertaken within the ambit of this thesis, the research hypothesis is hereby ‘accepted’.

6.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research encompassed the key elements for leadership communication and transformation and thus provided for a holistic approach for a practical structured transformation with leadership communication elements that logically merge into one another:

- Addressing the situation.
- Learning the background.
- Clarifying the problem to be changed.
- Committing to the vision.
- Supporting the change actions.
- Appreciating the results.

In the opinion of this researcher, with a plethora of research results and solution approaches for each key element available, in interrogating further, would increase the complexity of transformation processes for responsible leaders. This research therefore follows a holistic approach and raises awareness of an inner logic in order to not only ensure improved dialogue and understanding but also result in the effectiveness and efficiency required in times of crisis or VUCA situations in a situation- and people-oriented manner, contributing to the concept of human flourishing.

Being aware of the wide field of differentiation research already highlighted, this researcher pursued a different approach, namely for each new value paradigm to be applied to any area of transformation, which was underpinned by the examples of the following five transformation areas:

- Personal transformation.
- Social transformation.
- Organizational transformation.
- Environmental transformation.
- Technological transformation.

6.7 AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As an approach for further research, the solution to this research problem implicitly implies that the solution could be applied to more than one transformation area, and in turn gaining additional quantitative insight.

6.8 CLOSURE

This thesis has been undertaken with consideration of the true belief of the way of 'thinking outside ourselves'. This notion is based on a new value paradigm of transformation and contributing to human flourishing, and supported by purposefully structured process and communication elements, which has resulted in a unique approach to communication for transformation, serving to support leaders succeeding in transformation according to the following formula:

Leading Communication x Structured Process = Transformation Success.

In recognition of the power of communication and its relevance for successful transformation and human flourishing, a communicative framework has thus been developed to support the ongoing communication for transformation at a holistic leadership level. Intensive and systematic leadership communication, which is based on a close interlocking of key elements of communication therefore successfully shape transformation goals and channel major change actions in the VUCA world.

Perhaps in publishing this research, it may draw criticism that the differences between the various theories and deeper scientific background may have been overlooked. There are of course differences and details between the numerous theories, and once they are understood, they will be found to be of much less importance than is popularly—and sometimes politically—assumed.

The purpose of this researcher with this research study was that a summarised elucidation of communication for transformation from a leadership perspective have the potential to contribute to dialogue and understanding in the sense of effective and efficient transformation, irrespective of the area of responsibility, which may be personal, organisational, social, environmental or technological.

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